Q. HORATII FLACCI
EPISTOLA
AD
AUGUSTUM.

With an Engliſh

Commentary and Notes.

To which is added,

A DISCOURSE
CONCERNING
POETICAL IMITATION.

By the AUTHOR of the COMMENTARY, &c.
on the Epiſtle to the PISOS.

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ADVERSTISEMENT.

THE epiſtle to AUGUSTUS is *an apology for the Roman poets.* The epiſtle to the PISOS, *a criticiſm on their poetry. This* to Auguſtus may be therefore conſidered as a ſequel of *that* to the Piſos; and which could not well be omitted; for the author's deſign of forwarding the ſtudy and improvement of the *art of poetry* required him to beſpeak the public favour to its *profeſſors.*

But as, *there,* in correcting the abuſes of their poetry, he mixes, occaſionally, ſome encomiums on *poets*; ſo, *here,* in pleading the cauſe of the poets, we find him interweaving inſtructions on *poetry.* Which was but according to the writer's *occaſions* in each work. For the freedom of his cenſure on the *art of poetry* was to be ſoftened by ſome expreſſions of his good-will towards the *poets*; and this apology for their *fame* had been too direct and unmanaged, but for the qualifying appearance of its intending the further benefit of the *art.* The coincidence, then, of the ſame general *method,* as well as *deſign,* in the two epiſtles, made it not improper to give

them together, and on the ſame footing, to the public. Though both the *ſubject* and *method* of this laſt are ſo clear as to make a continued commentary upon it much leſs wanted.

It will, further, be obſerved, that theſe two pieces make a complete edition of Horace's CRITICAL, that is to ſay, the beſt and moſt exquiſite of *all* his writings.

Q. HORATII FLACCI

EPISTOLA AD AUGUSTUM.

CUM tot ſuſtineas & tanta negotia ſolus,
Res Italas armis tuteris, moribus ornes,
Legibus emendes; in publica commoda peccem,
Si longo ſermone morer tua tempora, Caeſar.

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EPISTOLA AD AUGUSTUM.] In conducting this work, which is *an apology for the poets of his own time*, the method of the writer is no other, than that which plain ſenſe, and the ſubject itſelf required of him. For, as the main diſlike to the Auguſtan poets had ariſen from an *exceſſive reverence* paid to their elder brethren, the *firſt* part of the epiſtle [from ℣ 1 to 118] is very naturally laid out

Romulus, & Liber pater, & cum Caſtore Pollux,
Poſt ingentia fata, Deorum in templa recepti,
Dum terras hominumque colunt genus, aſpera bella
Conponunt, agros adſignant, oppida condunt;
Ploravere ſuis non reſpondere favorem
Speratum meritis. diram qui contudit Hydram,
Notaque fatali portenta labore ſubegit,
Comperit invidiam ſupremo fine domari.
Urit enim fulgore ſuo, qui praegravat artis
Infra ſe poſitas: extinctus amabitur idem.

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in the ridicule and confutation of ſo abſurd a prejudice. And having, by this preparation, obtained a candid hearing for his defence, he then proceeds [in what follows, to the *end*] to vindicate their real *merits*; ſetting in view the excellencies of the *latin poetry*, as cultivated by the great modern maſters; and throwing the blame of their ill ſucceſs, and of the contempt in which they had lain, not ſo much on themſelves, or their *profeſſion* (the dignity of *which* in particular, he inſiſts highly upon, and aſſerts with ſpirit) as on the vicious taſte of the age, and certain unfavouring circumſtances, which had accidentally concurred to diſhonour *both*.

This idea of the *general* plan being comprehended, the reader will find it no difficulty to perceive the order and arrangement of *particular* parts, which the natural tranſition of the poet's thought inſenſibly drew along with it.

5---118. ROMULUS, ET LIBER PATER, &c. The ſubject commences from ℣ 5, where, by a contrivance of great beauty, a pertinent *illuſtration* of the poet's argument becomes an offering of the happieſt *addreſs* to the emperor. Its *double* purpoſe may be ſeen thus. His primary intention was to take off the force of prejudice againſt *modern* poets, ariſing from the ſuperior veneration of the *antients*. To this end the firſt thing wanting was to demonſtrate by ſome ſtriking inſtance, that it was, indeed, nothing

Praeſenti tibi maturos largimur honores,
Jurandaſque tuum per numen ponimus aras,
Nil oriturum alias, nil ortum tale fatentes.
Sed tuus hoc populus ſapiens & juſtus in uno,
Te noſtris ducibus, & Graiis anteferendo,
Cetera nequaquam ſimili ratione modoque
Aeſtimat; &, niſi quae terris ſemota ſuiſque
Temporibus defuncta videt, faſtidit & odit:
Sic fautor veterum, ut Tabulas peccare vetantis,
Quas bis quinque viri ſanxerunt, Foedera regum

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nothing but *prejudice*; which he does effectually in taking that inſtance from the *heroic*, that is, the moſt revered, ages. For if ſuch, whoſe acknowledged virtues and eminent ſervices had raiſed them to the rank of *heroes*, that is, in the pagan conception of things, to the honours of *divinity*, could not ſecure their fame, in their own times, againſt the injuries of malevolent ſlander, what wonder that the race of *wits*, whoſe obſcurer merit is leſs likely to dazzle the public eye; and yet, by a peculiar fatality, is more apt to enkindle the envy and ill-will of others, ſhould find themſelves oppreſſed by its rudeſt cenſure? In the *former* caſe, the honours, which equal poſterity paid to excelling worth, declare all *ſuch* cenſure to have been the calumny of malice only. What reaſon then to conclude, it had any other original in the *latter*? This is the poet's *argument*.

But now, of theſe worthies themſelves, whom the juſtice of grateful poſterity had ſnatched out of the hands of detraction, there were ſome, it ſeems, whoſe illuſtrious ſervices the virtue or vain-glory of the emperor moſt affected to emulate; and theſe, therefore, the poet, by an ingenious flattery, ſelects for examples to his general *obſervation*,

Romulus & Liber pater, & cum Caſtore Pollux
Poſt ingentia fata, &c.

Vel Gabiis vel cum rigidis aequata Sabinis,
Pontificum libros, annoſa volumina Vatum,
Dictitet Albano Muſas in monte locutas.
Si, quia Graiorum ſunt antiquiſſima quaeque
Scripta vel optima, Romani penſantur eadem
Scriptores trutina; non eſt quod multa loquamur:

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Further, as the good fortune of Auguſtus, though adorned with the *ſame* enviable qualities, had exempted *him* from the injuries which had conſtantly befallen *thoſe admired characters*, this peculiar circumſtance in the hiſtory of his prince affords him the happieſt occaſion, flattery could deſire, of paying diſtinguiſhed honours to his glory.

Praeſenti tibi maturos largimur honores.

And this conſtitutes the fine *addreſs and compliment of his Application.*

But this juſtice, which Auguſtus had exacted, as it were, by the very authority of his virtue, from his applauding people, was but ill diſcharged in other inſtances.

Sed tuus hic populus ſapiens & juſtus in uno,
Te noſtris ducibus, te Graiis anteferendo,
Cetera nequaquam ſimili ratione modoque
Æſtimat, &c.

And thus the very *exception* to the general rule, which forms the encomium, leads him with advantage again into his *argument*; which was to obſerve and expoſe "the "maglignant influence of prepoſſeſſion in obſtructing the "proper glories of living merit." So that, as good ſenſe demands in every reaſonable panegyric, the praiſe reſults from the nature and foundation of the ſubject-matter, and is not violently and reluctantly dragged into it.

His general charge againſt his countrymen "of their "bigotted attachment to thoſe, dignified by the name of "*antients*, in prejudice to the juſt deſerts of the moderns," being thus delivered; and the folly of ſuch conduct, with ſome agreeable exaggeration, expoſed; he ſets himſelf, with

Nil intra eſt olea, nil extra eſt in nuce duri:
Venimus ad ſummum fortunae: pingimus, atque
Pſallimus, & luctamur Achivis doctius unctis.
Si meliora dies, ut vina, poemata reddit;
Scire velim, chartis pretium quotus arroget annus,
Scriptor ab hinc annos centum qui decidit, inter

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with a happy mixture of irony and argument, as well becomes the genius and character of the *epiſtle*, to confute the pretences, and overturn the very *foundations*, on which it reſted.

One main ſupport of their folly was taken from an allowed fact, viz. "That the oldeſt *Greek* writers were in-"conteſtably ſuperior to the modern ones." From whence they inferred, that it was but according to nature and the courſe of experience, to give the like preference to the oldeſt *Roman* maſters.

His confutation of this ſophiſm conſiſts of two parts. *Firſt*, [from ℣ 28 to 32] He inſiſts on the *evident* abſurdity of the opinion he is confuting. There was no reaſoning with perſons, capable of ſuch *extravagant poſitions*. But, *ſecondly*, the pretended fact itſelf, with regard to the Greek learning, was *groſsly miſunderſtood, or perverſely applied*. For [from ℣ 32 to 34] it was not true, nor could it be admitted, that the very *oldeſt* of the *Greek* writers were the beſt, but thoſe only, which were old, in compariſon of the mere modern Greeks. The ſo much applauded models of Grecian antiquity were themſelves *modern*, in reſpect of the ſtill *older* and ruder eſſays of their firſt writers. It was long diſcipline and cultivation, the ſame which had given the Greek *artiſts* in the Auguſtan reign a ſuperiority over the Roman, that by degrees eſtabliſhed the good taſte, and fixed the authority of the Greek *poets*; from which point it was natural and even neceſſary for ſucceeding, *i. e.* the modern Greeks to decline. But no conſequence lay from hence to the advantage of the Latin poets, in queſtion; who were wholly unfurniſhed with any previous ſtudy of

Perfectos veteresque referri debet, an inter
Viles atque novos? excludat jurgia finis.
Est vetus atque probus centum qui perficit annos.
Quid? qui deperiit minor uno mense vel anno,
Inter quos referendus erit? veteresne poetas,
An quos & praesens & postera respuat aetas?
Iste quidem veteres inter ponetur honeste,
Qui vel mense brevi, vel toto est junior anno.
Utor permisso, caudaeque pilos ut equinae
Paullatim vello; & demo unum, demo & item unum;
Dum cadat elusus ratione ruentis acervi,
Qui redit ad fastos, & virtutem aestimat annis,
Miraturque nihil, nisi quod Libitina sacravit.
Ennius & sapiens, & fortis, & alter Homerus,

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the arts of verse; and whose works could only be compared with the very *oldest*, that is, the rude, forgotten essays of the Greek poetry. So that the fine sense, so closely shut up in this concise couplet, comes out thus: "The modern "Greek masters of the *fine arts* are confessedly superior to "the modern Roman. The reason is, they have practised "them longer, and with more diligence. Just so, the "modern Roman writers must needs have the advantage "of their *old* ones; who had no knowledge of writing, "as an *art*, or, if they had, had small care to put it in "practice."

Further, this plea of antiquity is as uncertain in its *application*, as it was destitute of all truth and reason in its original *foundation*. For if age only must bear away the palm, what way is there of determining, which writers are *modern*, and which *antient*? The impossibility of fixing this to the satisfaction of an objector, which is pursued [to ℣ 50] with much agreeable raillery, makes it evident, that the circumstance of antiquity is absolutely nothing; and that, in *estimating the merit* of writers, the real, intrinsic excellence

Ut critici dicunt, leviter curare videtur
Quo promiſſa cadant, & ſomnia Pythagorea.
Naevius in manibus non eſt, & mentibus haeret
Pene recens? adeo ſanctum eſt vetus omne poema.
Ambigitur quotiens, uter utro ſit prior; aufert
Pacuvius docti famam ſenis, Accius alti:
Dicitur Afranî toga conveniſſe Menandro;
Plautus ad exemplar Siculi properare Epicharmi:
Vincere Caecilius gravitate, Terentius arte.
Hos ediſcit, & hos arto ſtipata theatro
Spectat Roma potens; habet hos numeratque poetas
Ad noſtrum tempus, Livî Scriptoris ab aevo.

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lence of their writings *themſelves* is alone to be regarded.

Thus far the poet's intent was to combat the *general* prejudice of the critic,

Qui redit in faſtos & virtutem aeſtimat annis.

Taking the fact for granted "of his ſtrong prepoſſeſſion "for antiquity, *as ſuch*" he would diſcredit, both by raillery and argument, ſo abſurd a conduct. What he gains, by this diſpoſition, is to come to the *particulars* of his charge with more advantage. For the popular contempt of modern compoſition, ſheltering itſelf under a ſhew of learned admiration of the *antients*, whoſe age and reputation had made them truly venerable, and whoſe genuine merits, in the main, could not be diſputed, a direct attack upon their fame, at ſetting out, without any ſoftening, had diſguſted the moſt *moderate*; whereas this prefatory appeal to common ſenſe, under the cover of general criticiſm, would even diſpoſe bigottry itſelf to afford the poet a candid hearing. His accuſation then of the public taſte comes in, here, very pertinently; and is delivered, with addreſs [from ℣ 50 to 63] in a particular detail of the judgments paſſed upon the moſt celebrated of the old Roman poets, by the generality of the modern critics; where, to win upon

Interdum volgus rectum videt: eſt ubi peccat.
Si veteres ita miratur laudatque poetas,
Ut nihil anteferat, nihil illis comparet; errat:
Si quaedam nimis antique, ſi pleraque dure
Dicere cedit eos, ignave multa fatetur;
Et ſapit, et mecum facit, & Jove judicat aequo.
Non equidem inſector, delendaque carmina Laevî
Eſſe reor, memini quae plagoſum mihi parvo
Orbilium dictare; ſed emendata videri
Pulchraque, & exactis minimum diſtantia, miror:

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their prejudices ſtill further by his generoſity and good faith, he ſcruples not to recount ſuch of their determinations on the merit of antient writers, as were reaſonable and well founded, as well as others, that he deemed leſs juſt, and as ſuch intended more immediately to expoſe.

We ſee then with what art the poet conducts himſelf in this attack on the *antients*, and how it ſerved his purpoſe, by turns, to ſoften and aggravate the *charge*. *Firſt*, "he "wanted to lower the reputation of the old poets." This was not to be done by general invective or an affected diſſimulation of their juſt praiſe. He admits then [from ℣ 63 to 66] their reaſonable pretenſions to *admiration*. 'Tis the *degree* of it alone, to which he objects.

Si veteres ITA *miratur laudatque*, *&c.*

Secondly, "he wanted to draw off their applauſes from the "antient to the modern poets." This required the *advantages* of thoſe moderns to be diſtinctly ſhewn, or, which comes to the ſame, the *comparative deficiencies* of the antients to be pointed out. Theſe were not to be diſſembled and are, as he openly inſiſts [to ℣ 69] *obſolete language*, *rude and barbarous conſtruction*, and *ſlovenly compoſition*.

Si quaedam nimis ANTIQUE, *ſi pleraque* DURE,
Dicere cedit eos, IGNAVE *multa*.

But what then? an objector replies, theſe were venial faults, ſurely; the *deficiences* of the times, and not of the men;

Inter quae verbum emicuit ſi forte decorum,
Si verſus paulo concinnior unus & alter;
Injuſte totum ducit venitque poema.
Indignor quicquam reprehendi, non quia craſſe
Compoſitum, illepideve putetur, ſed quia nuper:
Nec veniam antiquis, ſed honorem & praemia poſci.
Recte necne crocum floreſque perambulet Attae
Fabula, ſi dubitem; clament periiſſe pudorem

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men; who, with ſuch incorrectneſſes as are here noted, might ſtill poſſeſs the greateſt *talents*, and produce the nobleſt *deſigns*. This [from ℣ 69 to 79] is readily admitted. But, in the mean time, one thing was clear, that they were not *finiſhed models—exactis minimum diſtantia*. Which was the main point in diſpute. For the bigot's abſurdity lay in this,

Non veniam antiquis, ſed honorem & praemia poſci.

Nay, his folly is ſhewn to have gone ſtill greater lengths. Theſe boaſted models of antiquity, with all their imperfections, had occaſionally [℣ 73, 74] though the inſtances were indeed rare and thinly ſcattered, *ſtriking beauties*. Theſe, under the recommendation of *age*, which, of courſe, commands our reverence, might well impoſe on the judgments of the *generality*, and ſtanding forth with advantage, as from a ſhaded and dark *ground*, would naturally catch the eye and admiration of the more *learned*. Thus much the poet candidly inſinuates in excuſe of the bigot's *ill judgment*. But, unluckily, he had cut himſelf off from the benefit of this plea, by avowedly grounding his *admiration*, not merely on the intrinſic excellence, ſo far as it went, of the antient poetry itſelf; but on the advantage of any extraneous circumſtance, which but caſually ſtuck to it. The accident of a play's having paſſed through the mouth, and been graced by the action, of a juſt ſpeaker, was ſufficient [from ℣ 79 to 83] (ſo inexcuſable were his prejudices) to attract his wonder, and juſtify his eſteem. In ſo much

Cuncti pene patres: ea cum reprehendere coner,
Quae gravis Aeſopus, quae doctus Roſcius egit.
Vel quia nil rectum, niſi quod placuit ſibi, ducunt;
Vel quia turpe putant parere minoribus, &, quae
Inberbi didicere, ſenes perdenda fateri.
Jam Saliare Numae carmen qui laudat, & illud

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much that it became an inſolence, generally cried out upon, for any one to cenſure ſuch pieces of the theatre,

Quae gravis Æſopus, quae doctus Roſcius egit.

This being the caſe, it was no longer a doubt, whether the affected admiration of antiquity proceeded from a deluded judgment only, or a much worſe cauſe. It could plainly be reſolved into no other, than the willful agency of the malignant affections; which, wherever they prevail, corrupt the ſimple and ingenuous ſenſe of the mind, either 1. [ỳ 83] *in engendring high conceits of ſelf*, and referring all degrees of excellence to the ſuppoſed infallible ſtandard of every man's own judgment; or 2. [to ỳ 86] *in creating a falſe ſhame*, and reluctancy in us to be directed by the judgments of others, though *ſeen* to be more equitable, whenever they are found in oppoſition to our own rooted and preconceived opinions. The bigottry of *old men* is, eſpecially, for this reaſon, invincible. They hold themſelves upbraided by the ſharper ſight of their juniors; and regard the adoption of new ſentiments, at their years, as ſo much abſolute loſs on the ſide of the dead ſtock of their old literary poſſeſſions. Theſe conſiderations are generally of ſuch prevalency in grey veteran critics, that [from ỳ 86 to 90] whenever, as in the caſe before us, they pretend an uncommon zeal for antiquity, and their ſagacity piques itſelf on detecting the ſuperior value of obſcure rhapſodiſts, whom nobody elſe reads, or is able to underſtand, we may be ſure the ſecret view of ſuch, is, not the generous defence and patronage of *antient* wit, but a low malevolent pleaſure in decrying the juſt pretenſions of the *modern*.

Ingeniis

Quod mecum ignorat, ſolus volt ſcire videri;
Ingeniis non ille favet plauditque ſepultis,
Noſtra ſed impugnat, nos noſtraque lividus odit.
Quod ſi tam Graiis novitas inviſa fuiſſet,
Quam nobis; quid nunc eſſet vetus? aut quid haberet,
Quod legeret tereretque viritim publicus uſus?

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Ingeniis non ille favet plauditque ſepultis,
Noſtra ſed impugnat, nos noſtraque lividus odit.

The poet had, now, made appear the unreaſonable attachment of his countrymen to the fame of their old writers. He had throughly unravelled the ſophiſtical pretences, on which it affected to juſtify itſelf; and had even dared to unveil the *ſecret iniquitous principle*, from which it aroſe. It was now time to look forward to the *effects* of it; which were, in truth, very baleful; its poiſonous influences being of force to corrupt and wither, as it were, in the bud, every riſing ſpecies of excellence, and fatally to check the very hopes and tendencies of true genius. Nothing can be truer, than this remark; which he further enforces, and brings home to his adverſaries, by aſking a pertinent queſtion, to which it concerned them to make a ſerious reply. They had magnified ℣ 28 the perfection of the Greek models. But what [to ℣ 93] if the Greeks had conceived the ſame averſion to *novelties*, as the Romans? How then could *thoſe* models have ever been furniſhed to the public uſe? The queſtion, we ſee, inſinuates what was before affirmed to be the truth of the caſe; that the unrivalled excellence of the Greek poets proceeded only from long and vigorous exerciſe, and a painful uninterrupted application to the arts of verſe. The liberal ſpirit of that people led them to countenance every new attempt towards ſuperior literary excellence; and ſo, by the public favour, their writings, from rude eſſays, became at length the ſtandard and admiration of ſucceeding wits. The Romans had treated their adventurers quite otherwiſe, and the effect was anſwerable. This is the purport of what

Ut primum poſitis nugari Graecia bellis
Coepit, & in vitium fortuna labier aequa;
Nunc athletarum ſtudiis, nunc arſit equorum:
Marmoris, aut eboris fabros, aut aeris amavit;
Suſpendit picta vultum mentemque tabella;
Nunc tibicinibus, nunc eſt gaviſa tragoedis:
Sub nutrice puella velut ſi luderet infans,
Quod cupide petiit, mature plena reliquit.
Quid placet, aut odio eſt, quod non mutabile credas?
Hoc paces habuere bonae, ventique ſecundi.
Romae dulce diu fuit & ſollenne, recluſa
Mane domo vigilare, clienti promere jura:

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to a common eye may look like a *digreſſion* [from ℣ 93 to 108] in which is delineated the very different genius and practice of the two nations. For the *Greeks* [to ℣ 102] had applied themſelves, in the intervals of their leiſure from the toils of war, to the cultivation of every ſpecies of elegance, whether in *arts*, or *letters*; and loved to cheriſh the public emulation, by affording a free indulgence to the various and volatile diſpoſition of the times. The activity of theſe reſtleſs ſpirits, was inceſſantly attempting ſome new and untryed *form* of compoſition; and, when *that* was brought to a due degree of perfection, it turned, *in good time*, to the cultivation of ſome *other*.

Quod cupide petiit, mature plena reliquit.

So that the very caprice of *humour* [℣ 101] aſſiſted, in this libertine country, to advance and help forward the public taſte. Such was the effect of *peace and opportunity* with them.

Hoc paces habuere bonae ventique ſecundi.

Whereas the *Romans* [to ℣ 108] by a more compoſed temperament and ſaturnine complexion had devoted their pains to the purſuit of domeſtic utilities, and a more dexterous

Scriptos nominibus certis expendere nummos:
Majores audire, minori dicere, per quae
Creſcere res poſſet, minui damnoſa libido.
Mutavit mentem populus levis, & calet uno
Scribendi ſtudio: pueri patreſque ſeveri
Fronde comas vincti coenant, & carmina dictant.
Ipſe ego, qui nullos me adfirmo ſcribere verſus,
Invenior Parthis mendacior; & prius orto
Sole vigil, calamum & chartas & ſcrinia poſco.
Navem agere ignarus navis timet: abrotonum aegro
Non audet, niſi qui didicit, dare: quod medicorum eſt,
Promittunt medici: tractant fabrilia fabri:

COMMENTARY.

terous management of the *art of gain*. The conſequence of which was, that when [to ℣ 117] by the decay of the old frugal ſpirit, the neceſſary effect of overflowing plenty and eaſe, they began, at length, to ſeek out for the elegancies of life; and *a fit of verſifying*, the firſt of all liberal amuſements, that uſually ſeizes an idle people, had come upon them; their ignorance of rules, and want of exerciſe in the art of writing, rendered them wholly unfit to ſucceed in it. So that their aukward attempts in poetry were now as diſgraceful to their *taſte*, as their total diſregard of it, before, had been to their *civility*. The root of this miſchief was the idolatrous regard paid to their antient poets; which unluckily when the public emulation was ſet a going, not only checked its progreſs, but gave it a wrong bias; and, inſtead of helping true genius to outſtrip the lame and tardy endeavours of antient wit, drew it aſide into a vicious and unprofitable mimicry of its very imperfections. Whence it came to paſs, that, whereas in other *arts*, the previous knowledge of rules is required to the practice of them, in this of *verſifying*, no ſuch qualification was deemed neceſſary.

Scribimus

Scribimus indocti doctique poemata paſſim.
Hic error tamen & levis haec inſania quantas
Virtutes habeat, ſic collige: vatis avarus
Non temere eſt animus: verſus amat, hoc ſtudet unum;
Detrimenta, fugas ſervorum, incendia ridet:
Non fraudem ſocio, puerove incogitat ullam
Pupillo: vivit ſiliquis, & pane ſecundo:
Militiae quanquam piger & malus, utilis urbi;
Si das hoc, parvis quoque rebus magna juvari;
Os tenerum pueri balbumque poëta figurat:
Torquet ab obſcaenis jam nunc ſermonibus aurem;
Mox etiam pectus praeceptis format amicis,

COMMENTARY.

Scribimus indocti doctique poemata paſſim.

This miſchance was *doubly* fatal to the Latin poetry. For the ill ſucceſs of theſe blind adventurers had increaſed the original miſchief, by confirming, as it needs muſt, the ſuperſtitious reverence of the old writers; and inſenſibly brought, as well the art itſelf, as the modern profeſſors of it, into diſrepute with the diſcerning public. The vindication of *both*, then, at this critical juncture, was become highly ſeaſonable; and to this, which was the poet's main purpoſe, he addreſſes himſelf through the remainder of the epiſtle.

118 to the end. HIC ERROR TAMEN, &c.] Having ſufficiently obviated the popular and reigning prejudices againſt the modern poets, his office of *advocate* for their fame, which he had undertaken, and was now to diſcharge, in form, required him to ſet their real merits and pretenſions in a juſt light. He enters therefore immediately on this taſk. And, in drawing the character of the *true poet*, endeavours to impreſs as advantageous an idea, as poſſible, on the emperor, of the worth and dignity of their calling. And this, not in the fierce inſulting tone of

Aſperitatis & invidiae corrector & irae;
Recte facta refert: orientia tempora notis
Inſtruit exemplis; inopem ſolatur & aegrum.
Caſtis cum pueris ignara puella mariti
Diſceret unde preces, vatem ni Muſa dediſſet?
Poſcit opem chorus, & praeſentia numina ſentit;
Coeleſtes implorat aquas, docta prece blandus;
Avertit morbos, metuenda pericula pellit;
Inpetrat & pacem, & locupletem frugibus annum:
Carmine Dî ſuperi placantur, carmine Manes.

COMMENTARY.

of a zealot for the *honour of his order*, which to the *great* is always diſguſting, and where the occaſion is, confeſſedly, not of the laſt importance, plainly abſurd; but with that unpretending air of inſinuation, which good ſenſe, improved by a thorough knowledge of the world, teaches: with that ſeeming indifference, which diſarms prejudice: in a word, with that gracious *ſmile in his aſpect*, which his ſtrong admirer and faint copyer, Perſius, ſo juſtly noted in him, and which convinces almoſt without the help of argument; or to ſay it more truly, *perſuades* where it doth not properly *convince*. In this diſpoſition he ſets out on his defence; and yet omits no *particular*, which could any way ſerve to the real recommendation of *poets*, or which indeed, the graveſt and warmeſt of their friends have ever pleaded in their behalf. This defence conſiſts [from ℣ 118 to 139] in bringing into view their many *civil*, *moral*, and *religious* virtues. For the muſe, as the poet contends (and nothing could be more likely to conciliate the eſteem of the politic emperor) adminiſters, in this threefold capacity, to the ſervice of the ſtate.

But *Religion*, which was its *nobleſt end*, was, beſides, the *firſt object* of poetry. The dramatic muſe, in particular, had her birth, and derived her very character, from it. This circumſtance then leads him with advantage, to give an hiſtorical deduction of the riſe and progreſs of the Latin

Agricolae priſci, fortes, parvoque beati,
Condita poſt frumenta, levantes tempore feſto
Corpus & ipſum animum ſpe finis dura ferentem,
Cum ſociis operum pueris & conjuge fida,
Tellurem porco, Silvanum lacte piabant,
Floribus & vino Genium memorem brevis aevi.
Feſcennina per hunc invecta licentia morem
Verſibus alternis opprobria ruſtica fudit;
Libertaſque recurrentis accepta per annos
Luſit amabiliter: donec jam ſaevus apertam
In rabiem verti coepit jocus, & per honeſtas
Ire domos impune minax. doluere cruento
Dente lacceſſiti: fuit intactis quoque cura
Conditione ſuper communi: quin etiam lex
Poenaque lata, malo quae nollet carmine quemquam
Deſcribi. vertere modum, formidine fuſtis

COMMENTARY.

tin poeſy, from its firſt rude workings in the days of barbarous ſuperſtition, through every ſucceſſive period of its improvement, down to his own times. Such a view of its deſcent and gradual reformation was directly to the poet's purpoſe. For having magnified the virtues of his order, as of ſuch importance to ſociety, the queſtion naturally occurred, by what unhappy means it had fallen out, that it was, nevertheleſs, in ſuch low eſtimation with the public. The anſwer is, that the ſtate of the Latin poetry, as yet, was very rude and imperfect: and ſo the public diſregard was occaſioned, only, by its not having attained to that degree of perfection, of which its *nature* was capable. Many reaſons had concurred to keep the Latin poetry in this ſtate, which he proceeds to enumerate. The *firſt and principal* was [from ℣ 139 to 164] the little attention paid *to critical learning, and the cultivation of a correct and juſt ſpirit of compoſition.* Which, again, had ariſen from the coarſe

Ad bene dicendum delectandumque redacti.
Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit, & artis
Intulit agresti Latio. sic horridus ille
Defluxit numerus Saturnius, & grave virus
Munditiae pepulere: sed in longum tamen aevum
Manserunt, hodieque manent, vestigia ruris.
Serus enim Graecis admovit acumina chartis;
Et post Punica bella quietus quaerere coepit,
Quid Sophocles & Thespis & Aeschylos utile ferrent:
Tentavit quoque rem, si digne vertere posset:
Et placuit sibi, natura sublimis & acer.
Nam spirat tragicum satis, & feliciter audet;
Sed turpem putat inscitus metuitque lituram.
Creditur, ex medio quia res arcessit, habere

COMMENTARY.

coarse illiberal dispositon of the Latin muse, who had been nurtured and brought up under the roof of rural superstition; and this, by an impure mixture of licentious jollity, had so corrupted her very nature, that it was only by slow degrees, and not till the conquest of Greece had imported arts and learning into Italy, that she began to chastise her manners, and assume a juster and more becoming deportment. Yet still she was but in the condition of a rustic *beauty*, when practising her aukward airs, and making her first ungracious essays towards a *maniére*.

in longum tamen aevum
Manserunt, hodieque manent vestigia ruris.

Her late acquaintance with the Greek models had, indeed, improved her air, and inspired an inclination to emulate their noblest graces. But how successfully, we are given to understand from her unequal attempts in the two sublimer species of their poetry, the TRAGIC, AND COMIC DRAMAS.

1. [from ℣ 160 to 168] *The study of the Greek tragedians* had very naturally, and to good purpose, in the in-

Sudoris minimum ; ſed habet Comoedia tanto
Plus oneris, quanto veniae minus. aſpice, Plautus
Quo pacto partis tutetur amantis ephebi ; 171
Ut patris attenti, lenonis ut inſidioſi :
Quantus ſit Doſſennus edacibus in paraſitis :
Quam non adſtricto percurrat pulpita ſocco.
Geſtit enim nummum in loculos demittere ; poſt hoc
Securus, cadat an recto ſtet fabula talo. 176

COMMENTARY.

fancy of their taſte, diſpoſed the Latin writers to *tranſlation*. Here they ſtuck long ; for their tragedy, even in the Auguſtan age was little elſe ; and yet they ſucceeded but indifferently in it. The bold and animated genius of Rome was, it is readily owned, well ſuited to this work. And for force of colouring, and a truly tragic elevation, the Roman poets came not behind their great originals. But unfortunately their judgment was unformed, and they were too ſoon ſatisfied with their own productions. Strength and fire was all they endeavoured after. And with this praiſe they ſate down perfectly contented. The diſcipline of correction, the curious poliſhing of art, which had given ſuch a luſtre to the Greek tragedians, they knew nothing of, or, to ſpeak their folly more truly, they held diſgraceful to the high ſpirit and energy of the Roman genius :

TURPEM PUTAT IN SCRIPTIS METUITQUE LITURAM.

2. It did not fare better with them [from ℣ 168 to 175] in their attempts to rival *the Greek comedy*. They prepoſterouſly ſet out with a notion of the *eaſier* execution of this drama, than of the tragic ; whereas, in truth, its genuine character was much more difficult to hit exactly. As the *ſubject* of comedy was taken from common life, they ſuppoſed an ordinary degree of care might ſuffice, to do it juſtice. No wonder then, they overlooked or never came up to that nice adjuſtment of the *manners*, that truth and decorum of *character*, wherein the glory of comic painting conſiſts, and which none but the quickeſt eye can diſcern,

Quem tulit ad ſcenam ventoſo gloria curru,
Exanimat lentus ſpectator, ſedulus inflat.
Sic leve, ſic parvum eſt, animum quod laudis avarum
Subruit ac reficit. valeat res ludicra, ſi me
Palma negata macrum, donata reducit opimum.
Saepe, etiam audacem, fugat hoc terretque poetam;
Quod numero plures, virtute et honore minores,
Indocti, ſtolidique, & depugnare parati

COMMENTARY.

diſcern, and the ſteddieſt hand execute; and, in the room, amuſed us with *high colouring*, and *falſe drawing*; with *extravagant*, *aggravated portraitures*; which neglecting the modeſt proportion of real life, are the certain arguments of an unpractiſed pencil, or vicious taſte.

What contributed to this proſtitution of the comic muſe, was [to ℣ 177] the ſeducement of that corruptreſs of all virtue, *the love of money*; which had thoroughly infected the Roman wits, and was, in fact, the ſole object of their pains. Hence, provided they could but catch the applauſes of the people, to which the pleaſantry of the comic ſcene more eſpecially aſpires, and ſo ſecure a good round *price* from the magiſtrates, whoſe office it was to furniſh this kind of entertainment, they became indifferent to every nobler view and honeſter purpoſe. In particular [to ℣ 182] they ſo little conſidered *fame and the praiſe of good writing*, that they made it the ordinary topic of their ridicule; repreſenting it as the mere illuſion of vanity, and the pitiable infirmity of *lean-witted* minds, to be catched by the lure of ſo empty and unſubſtantial a benefit.

Though, were any one ſo *daring*, in defiance of public ridicule (as there is no occaſion in life, which calls for, or demonſtrates a greater firmneſs) as frankly to avow and ſubmit himſelf to this generous *motive*, the beſt and ſureſt inſpirer of every virtuous excellence, yet one thing remained to check and weaken the vigour of his emulation. This [from ℣ 182 to 187] was the folly and ill taſte of the undiſcerning multitude; who, in all countries, have a great

Si diſcordet eques, media inter carmina poſcunt
Aut urſum aut pugiles: his nam plebecula gaudet.
Verum equiti quoque jam migravit ab aure voluptas
Omnis, ad ingratos oculos, & gaudia vana.
Quattuor aut pluris aulaea premuntur in horas;
Dum fugiunt equitum turmae, peditumque catervae:
Mox trahitur manibus regum fortuna retortis:
Eſſeda feſtinant, pilenta, petorrita, naves:
Captivum portatur ebur, captiva Corinthus.
Si foret in terris, rideret Democritus; ſeu

COMMENTARY.

ſhare in determining the fate and character of ſcenical repreſentations; but, from the popular conſtitution of the government, were, at Rome, of the firſt conſequence. Theſe, by their rude clamours, and the authority of their numbers, were enough to diſhearten the moſt intrepid genius; when, after all his endeavours to reap the glory of an abſolute work, the *action* was almoſt ſure to be mangled and broken in upon by the ſhews of *wild beaſts and gladiators*; thoſe *dear delights*, which the Romans, it ſeems, prized much above the higheſt pleaſures of the drama.

Nay, the poet's caſe was ſtill more deſperate. For it was not the untutored rabble, as in other countries, that gave a countenance to theſe illiberal ſports: even *rank and quality*, at Rome, debaſed itſelf in ſhewing the fierceſt paſſion for theſe *ſhews*, and was as ready, as abject commonalty itſelf, to prefer the uninſtructing pleaſures of the *eye* to thoſe of the *ear*.

EQUITI *quoque jam migravit ab aure voluptas*
Omnis ad ingratos oculos & gaudia vana.

And, becauſe this barbarity of taſte had contributed more than any thing elſe to deprave the poetry of the ſtage, and diſcourage its beſt maſters from ſtudying its perfection, what follows [from ℣ 189 to 207] is intended, in all the keeneſs

Diverſum confuſa genus panthera camelo,
Sive elephas albus volgi converterit ora:
Spectaret populum ludis attentius ipſis,
Ut ſibi praebentem mimo ſpectacula plura:
Scriptores autem narrare putaret aſello
Fabellam ſurdo. nam quae pervincere voces
Evaluere ſonum, referunt quem noſtra theatra?
Garganum mugire putes nemus, aut mare Tuſcum.
Tanto cum ſtrepitu ludi ſpectantur, & artes,
Divitiaeque peregrinae: quibus oblitus actor
Cum ſtetit in ſcena, concurrit dextera laevae:
Dixit adhuc aliquid? nil ſane. quid placet ergo?

COMMENTARY.

keeneſs of raillery, to ſatyrize this madneſs. It afforded an ample field for the poet's ridicule. For, beſides the riotous diſorders of their theatre, the ſenſeleſs admiration of *pomp and ſpectacle* in their plays had ſo inchanted his countrymen, that the very decorations of the ſcene, the tricks and trappings of the comedians, were ſurer to catch the applauſes of the gaping multitude, than any regard to the juſtneſs of the poet's deſign, or the beauty of his execution.

Here the poet ſhould naturally have concluded his *defence of the dramatic writers*; having alledged every thing in their favour, that could be urged, plauſibly, from *the ſtate of the Roman ſtage: the genius of the people: and the ſeveral prevailing practices of ill taſte*, which had brought them into diſrepute with the beſt judges. But, finding himſelf obliged, in the courſe of this vindication of the modern *ſtage-poets*, to cenſure, as ſharply, as their very enemies, the vices and defects of their *poetry*; and fearing leſt this ſeverity on a ſort of writing, to which himſelf had never pretended, might be miſinterpreted as the effect of envy only, and a malignant diſpoſition towards the art itſelf, under cover of pleading for its *profeſſors*, he therefore

Lana Tarentino violas imitata veneno.
Ac ne forte putes me, quae facere ipſe recuſem,
Cum recte tractent alii, laudare maligne:
Ille per extentum funem mihi poſſe videtur
Ire poeta; meum qui pectus inaniter angit,
Irritat, mulcet, falſis terroribus implet,
Ut magus; & modo me Thebis, modo ponit Athenis.
Verum age, & his, qui ſe lectori credere malunt,
Quam ſpectatoris faſtidia ferre ſuperbi,
Curam impende brevem: ſi munus Apolline dignum
Vis complere libris; & vatibus addere calcar,
Ut ſtudio majore petant Helicona virentem.

COMMENTARY.

frankly avows [from ver. 208 to 214] his preference of the *dramatic*, to every other ſpecies of poetry; declaring the ſovereignty of its pathos over the *affections*, and the magic of its illuſive ſcenery on the *Imagination*, to be the higheſt argument of poetic excellence, the laſt and nobleſt exerciſe of the human genius.

One thing ſtill remained. He had taken upon himſelf to apologize for the Roman poets, in *general*; as may be ſeen from the large terms, in which he propoſes his ſubject.

Hic error tamen & levis haec inſania quantas
Virtutes habeat, ſic collige.

But, after a general encomium on the *office* itſelf, he confines his defence to the *writers for the ſtage* only. In concluſion then, he was conſtrained, by the very purpoſe of his addreſs, to ſay a word or two in the behalf of the remainder of this neglected family; of thoſe, who, as the poet expreſſes it, had rather *truſt to the equity of the cloſet, than ſubject themſelves to the caprice and inſolence of the theatre.*

Now, as before, in aſſerting the honour of the ſtage-poets, he every where ſuppoſes the emperor's *diſguſt* to

Multa quidem nobis facimus mala ſaepe poëtae,
(Ut vineta egomet caedam mea) cum tibi librum
Sollicito damus, aut feſſo: cum laedimur, unum
Si quis amicorum eſt auſus reprendere verſum:
Cum loca jam recitata revolvimus inrevocati:
Cum lamentamur non adparere labores
Noſtros, & tenui deducta poemata filo:
Cum ſperamus eo rem venturam, ut, ſimul atque
Carmina reſcieris nos fingere, commodus ultro
Arceſſas, & egere vetes, & ſcribere cogas.

COMMENTARY.

have ſprung from the wrong conduct of the poets themſelves, and then extenuates the blame of ſuch *conduct*, by conſidering, ſtill further, the *cauſes* which gave riſe to it; ſo he prudently obſerves the like method here. The politeneſs of his addreſs concedes to Auguſtus, the juſt *offence* he had taken to his brother poets; whoſe honour, however, he contrives to ſave by ſoftening the *occaſions* of it. This is the drift of what follows [from ℣ 214 to 229] where he pleaſantly recounts the ſeveral foibles and indiſcretions of the muſe; but in a way, that could only diſpoſe the emperor to ſmile at, or, at moſt, to pity her infirmities, not provoke his ſerious cenſure and diſeſteem. They amount, on the whole, but to certain idleneſſes of *vanity*, the almoſt inſeparable attendant of *wit*, as well as *beauty*; and may be forgiven in *each*, as implying a ſtrong *deſire* of pleaſing, or rather as *qualifying* both to pleaſe. One of the moſt exceptionable of theſe *vanities* was a fond perſuaſion, too readily taken up by men of parts and genius, that *preferment is the conſtant pay of merit*; and that, from the moment their talents become known to the public, diſtinction and advancement are ſure to follow. They believed, in ſhort, they had only to convince the world of their ſuperior abilities, to deſerve the favour and countenance of their prince. But fond and preſumptuous as

Sed tamen eſt operae pretium cognoſcere, qualis
Aedituos habeat belli ſpectata domique
Virtus, indigno non conmittenda poetae.
Gratus Alexandro regi Magno fuit ille
Choerilos, incultis qui verſibus & male natis
Rettulit acceptos, regale nomiſma, Philippos.
Sed veluti tractata notam labemque remittunt
Atramenta, fere ſcriptores carmine foedo
Splendida facta linunt. idem rex ille, poëma
Qui tam ridiculum tam care prodigus emit,

COMMENTARY.

theſe hopes are (continues the poet [from ℣ 229 to 244] with all the inſinuation of a courtier, and yet with a becoming ſenſe of the dignity of his own character) it may deſerve a ſerious conſideration, what poets are fit to be entruſted with the glory of princes; what *miniſters* are worth retaining in the ſervice of an illuſtrious VIRTUE, whoſe honours demand to be ſolemnized with a religious reverence, and ſhould not be left to the profanation of vile, unhallowed hands. And, to ſupport the authority of this remonſtrance, he alledges the example of a great Monarch, who had diſhonoured himſelf by a neglect of this care; of ALEXANDER THE GREAT, who, when maſter of the world, as Auguſtus now was, perceived, indeed, the importance of gaining a poet to his ſervice; but unluckily choſe ſo ill, that his encomiums (as muſt ever be the caſe with a vile panegyriſt) but tarniſhed the native ſplendor of thoſe virtues, which his office required him to preſent, in their fulleſt and faireſt glory, to the admiration of the world. In his appointment of *artiſts*, whoſe ſkill is, alſo, highly ſerviceable to the fame of princes, he ſhewed a truer judgment. For he ſuffered none but an APELLES and a LYSIPPUS to counterfeit the form and faſhion of his *perſon*. But his *taſte*, which was thus exact and even *ſubtile* in what concerned the mechanic execution of the *fine arts*,

Edicto vetuit; ne quis se, praeter Apellen
Pingeret, aut alius Lysippo cuderet aera
Fortis Alexandri voltum simulantia. quod si
Judicium subtile videndis artibus illud
Ad libros & ad haec Musarum dona vocares;
Boeotum in crasso jurares aëre natum.
At neque dedecorant tua de se judicia, atque
Munera, quae multa dantis cum laude tulerunt,
Dilecti tibi Virgilius Variusque poetae:
Nec magis expressi voltus per aënea signa,

COMMENTARY.

arts, took up with a CHOERILUS, to transmit an image of his *mind* to future ages; so grosly undiscerning was he in works of poetry, and the liberal *offerings of the muse!*

And thus the poet serves himself of the ill-judgment of this imperial critic, in a double respect. For nothing could better demonstrate the importance of *poetry* to the honour of *greatness*, than that this illustrious conqueror, without any particular knowledge or discernment in the *art* himself, should think himself concerned to court its assistance. And, then, what could be more likely to engage the emperor's further protection and love of *poetry*, than the insinuation (which is made with infinite address) that, as he honoured it equally, so he understood its merits much better. For [from ℣ 245 to 248, where, by a beautiful concurrence, the flattery of his prince falls in with the honester purpose of doing justice to the memory of his friends] it was not the same unintelligent liberality, which had cherished Choerilus, that poured the full stream of Caesar's bounty on such persons, as VARIUS and VIRGIL. And, as if the spirit of these inimitable poets had, at once, seized him, he breaks away in a bolder run of verse [from ℣ 248 to 250] *to sing the triumphs of an art*, which expressed the *manners and the mind* in fuller and more durable *relief*, than painting or even sculpture had ever been able

to

Quam per vatis opus mores animique virorum
Clarorum adparent. nec ſermones ego mallem
Repentis per humum, quam res conponere geſtas,
Terrarumque ſitus, & flumina dicere, & arcis
Montibus impoſitas, & barbara regna, tuiſque
Auſpiciis totum confecta duella per orbem,
Clauſtraque cuſtodem pacis cohibentia Janum,
Et formidatam Parthis, te principe, Romam:
Si quantum cuperem, poſſem quoque. ſed neque parvum
Carmen majeſtas recipit tua; nec meus audet
Rem tentare pudor, quam vires ferre recuſent.
Sedulitas autem ſtulte, quem diligit, urguet;
Praecipue cum ſe numeris conmendat & arte.
Diſcit enim citius, meminitque libentius illud
Quod quis deridet, quam quod probat & veneratur.
Nil moror officium, quod me gravat: ac neque ficto
In pejus voltu proponi cereus uſquam,
Nec prave factis decorari verſibus opto:

COMMENTARY.

to give to the external *figure:* And [from ℣ 250 to the end] *apologizes for himſelf* in adopting the humbler epiſtolary *ſpecies*, when a warmth of inclination and the unrivaled glories of his prince were continually urging him on to the nobler, *encomiaſtic* poetry. His excuſe, in brief, is taken from the conſcious inferiority of his genius, and a tenderneſs for the fame of the emperor, which is never more diſſerved than by the officious ſedulity of bad poets to do it honour. And with this apology, one while condeſcending to the unfeigned humility of a perſon, ſenſible of the *kind and meaſure* of his abilities, and then, again, ſuſtaining itſelf by a freedom and even familiarity, which real merit knows, on certain occaſions, to take without offence, the epiſtle concludes.

If

Ne rubeam pingui donatus munere, & una
Cum ſcriptore meo capſa porrectus operta,
Deferar in vicum vendentem tus & odores,
Et piper, & quicquid chartis amicitur ineptis. 270

COMMENTARY.

If the public opinion may be truſted, this, which was one of the *laſt*, is alſo among the *nobleſt*, of the great poet's compoſitions. Perhaps, the reader, who conſiders it in the plain and ſimple order, to which the foregoing analyſis hath reduced it, may ſatisfy himſelf, that this praiſe hath not been undeſervedly beſtowed.

NOTES

NOTES

ON THE

Epiſtle to Auguſtus.

Advertiſement.

THE *text*, as before, is printed from Dr. BENTLEY'S edition. And the *notes*, like thoſe on the *Epiſtle to the Piſos*, are not merely critical and explanatory; but, often occaſional diſquiſitions, to which the author was led by hints, ſuggeſted in the poem.

NOTES

ON THE

EPISTLE to AUGUSTUS.

4. SI LONGO SERMONE MORER TUA TEMPORA, CAESAR.] The poet is thought to begin with apologizing for the *ſhortneſs of this epiſtle*. And yet 'tis one of the longeſt he ever wrote. How is this inconſiſtency to be reconciled? "Horace parle peut-être "ainſi pour ne pas rebuter Auguſte, & pour lui faire con- "nôitre, qu'il prend tant de plaiſir à lui écrire, qu'il au- "roit fait une lettre, beaucoup plus longue, s'il avoit ſuivi "ſon inclination." This is the beſt account of the matter we have, hitherto, been able to come at, which, yet, is ſo frivolous, that hardly any reader, I dare ſay, will own himſelf ſatisfied with it. The familiar civility of ſuch a compliment, as M. Dacier ſuppoſes, might be well enough to an *equal*, or, if dreſſed up in ſpruce phraſes, might make a figure in the *lettres familieres & galantes* of his own nation; but is ſurely of a caſt, entirely foreign to the Roman gravity, more eſpecially in an addreſs to the emperor of the world. Mr. Pope, perceiving the abſurdity of the common interpretation, ſeems to have read the lines *interrogatively*; which, though it ſaves the ſenſe, and ſuits the purpoſe of the Engliſh poet very well, yet neither agrees with the language nor ſerious air of the original. The caſe, I believe, was this. The genius of epiſtolary writing demands, that the ſubject-matter be not abruptly delivered, or haſtily obtruded on the perſon addreſſed; but, as the law of decorum preſcribes (for the rule holds in *writing*, as in *converſation*) be gradually and reſpectfully introduced to him. This obtains more particularly in applications to the *great*, and on important ſubjects. But, now,

now, the poet, being to addreſs his prince on a point of no ſmall delicacy, and on which he foreſaw he ſhould have occaſion to hold him pretty long, prudently contrives to get, as ſoon as poſſible, into his ſubject; and, to that end, hath the art to convert the very tranſgreſſion of this rule into the juſteſt and moſt beautiful compliment.

That cautious preparation, which is ordinarily requiſite in our approaches to *greatneſs*, had been, the poet obſerves, in the preſent caſe, highly unſeaſonable, as the buſineſs and intereſts of the empire muſt, in the mean time, have ſtood ſtill and been ſuſpended. By *ſermone* then we are to underſtand, not the *body* of the epiſtle, but the proeme or *introduction* only. The *body*, as of public concern, might be allowed to engage, at full length, the emperor's attention. But the *introduction*, conſiſting of *ceremonial* only, the *common good* required him to ſhorten as much as poſſible. It was no time for uſing an inſignificant preamble, or, in our Engliſh phraſe, of making *long ſpeeches*. This reaſon, too, is founded, not merely in the elevated rank of the emperor, but in the peculiar diligence and ſollicitude, with which, hiſtory tells us, he endeavoured to promote, by various ways, the intereſts of his country. So that the compliment is as *juſt*, as it is *polite*. It may be further obſerved, that *ſermo* is uſed in Horace, to ſignify the ordinary ſtyle of converſation [See 1 Sat. 3. 65, and 4. 42.] and therefore not improperly denotes the familiarity of the epiſtolary addreſs, which, in its eaſy expreſſion, ſo nearly approaches to it.

13. URIT ENIM FULGORE SUO, QUI PRAEGRAVAT ARTES INFRA SE POSITAS: EXTINCTUS AMABITUR IDEM.] Such is the miſerable imbecillity of human nature, that it cannot, without pain, endure the very *ſhining* of that excellence, which contributes ſo much to enlighten and adorn it. We continually ſee this to be the caſe, with regard to ſuperior accompliſhments of every kind. But, of all the incentives of public *envy*, the moſt offenſive hath ever been the native ſplendor of true genius, more eſpecially when beaming through the *medium* of poetry, and directed to its nobleſt *end* of detecting and expoſing vice,

vice, and illuſtrating the genuin beauties of virtue and moral truth. The poet adds, indeed, as ſome conſolation to the ſufferings of *living* excellence, that its *memory* ſhall be had in reverence after death: *extinctus amabitur idem.* But this doth not always happen, at leaſt not from *all*; as may be ſeen in the caſe of a late *ſun of glory*; the luſtre of whoſe genius, even to his parting ray, was ſo inſufferable, that a very boſom friend, the moment he was *ſet*, could not help confeſſing the uneaſineſs, he had always felt from it. For, though the choiceſt of his beams were ſtill reſerved to gild this idol of his friendſhip, yet ſo unequal were his mere mortal powers to the honour of theſe divine communications, that, like the thunderer's *fires*, in the fable, their misfortune was to *burn*, where they intended to *bleſs*. After ſo ſtrange an inſtance of human frailty in one, who pretends to ſome ſhare of that *ethereal ſpirit*, which enables to *teach kings and ſenators wiſdom*, one is not to wonder much at the complaints of others, whoſe feebler ſenſe muſt needs ſubject them to quicker feelings. The outrages of theſe unhappy ſufferers are then to be forgiven. And the rather, ſince the genius of the great poet, which gave the provocation, is not ſo properly *extinct* as, for the further diſquietude of *dullneſs*, revived and kindled up afreſh in the breaſt of his *commentator*.

14. EXTINCTUS AMABITUR IDEM.] *Envy*, ſays a diſcerning antient, *is the vice of thoſe, who are too weak to contend, and too proud to ſubmit: vitium eorum, qui nec cedere volunt, nec poſſunt contendere*[a]. Which, while it ſufficiently expoſes the folly and malignity of this hateful paſſion, ſecures the honour of human nature; as implying at the ſame time, that its worſt corruptions are not without a mixture of generoſity in them. For this falſe pride in *refuſing to ſubmit*, though abſurd and miſchievous enough, when unſupported by all *ability to contend*, yet diſcovers ſuch a ſenſe of ſuperior excellence, as ſhews, how difficult it is for human nature to diveſt itſelf of all virtue. Accordingly, when the too powerful *ſplendor* is

[a] Quinctilian, lib. xi. c. 1.

withdrawn, our natural veneration of it takes place: *Extinctus amabitur idem.* This is the true expoſition of the poet's ſentiment; which therefore appears juſt the reverſe of what his French interpreter would fix upon him. "La "juſtice, que nous rendons aux grands hommes après leur "mort, ne vient pas de l'AMOUR, que nous avons pour "leur *vertu*, mais de la HAINE, dont notre cœur eſt rem-"pli pour ceux, qui ont pris leur PLACE." An obſervation, which only becomes the miſanthropy of an old cynic virtue, or the ſelfiſhneſs of a modern ſyſtem of ethics.

15. PRAESENTI TIBI MATUROS, &c. to ℣ 18.] We are not to wonder at this and the like extravagances of adulation in the Auguſtan poets. They had ample authority for what they did of this ſort. We know, that altars were decreed and erected to the Emperor by the command of the Senate; and that he was publicly invoked, as an eſtabliſhed, tutelary divinity. But the ſeeds of the corruption had been ſown much earlier. For we find it ſprung up, or rather (as of all the ill weeds, which the teeming ſoil of human depravity throws forth, none is more thriving and grows faſter than this of *flattery*) flouriſhing at its height, in the tyranny of J. CAESAR. Balbus, in a letter to Cicero [Ep. ad Att. l. ix] *Swears by the health and ſafety of Cæſar: ità, incolumi Caeſare, moriar.* And Dio tells us [L. xliv.] that it was, by the expreſs injunction of the Senate, decreed, even in Cæſar's life-time, that the Romans ſhould bind themſelves by this oath. The Senate alſo [as we learn from the ſame writer, L. xliii.] upon receiving the news of his defeat of Pompey's ſons, cauſed his ſtatue to be ſet up, in the temple of Romulus, with this inſcription, DEO INVICTO [b].

'Tis true, theſe and ſtill greater honours had been long paid to the Roman governors in their provinces, by the *ab-*

[b] Θεῷ ἀνικήτῳ ἐπιγράψαντες. Though, to complete the farce, it was with the greateſt ſhyneſs and reluctance, that the humility of theſe lords of the univerſe could permit itſelf to accept the enſigns of deity, as the court-hiſtorians of thoſe times are forward to inform us. An affectation, which was thought to ſit ſo well upon them, that we find it afterwards practiſed, in the abſurdeſt and moſt impudent manner, by the worſt of their ſucceſſors.

ject,

ject, ſlaviſh Aſiatics. And this, no doubt, facilitated the admiſſion of ſuch idolatries into the capital[c]. But that a people, from the higheſt notions of an independent, republican equality, could ſo ſoon be brought to this proſtrate adoration of their firſt *Lord*, is perfectly amazing! In this, they ſhewed themſelves ripe for ſervitude. Nothing could keep them out of the hands of a maſter. And one can ſcarcely read ſuch accounts, as theſe, without condemning the vain efforts and ſtruggles of dying patriotiſm, which laboured ſo fruitleſly, may one not almoſt ſay, ſo weakly? to protract the liberty of ſuch a people. Who can, after this, wonder at the incenſe, offered up by a few court-poets? The adulation of Virgil, which has given ſo much offence, and of Horace, who kept pace with him, was, we ſee, but the authorized language of the times; preſented indeed with addreſs, but without the heightenings and privileged licence of their profeſſion. For, to their credit, it muſt be owned, that, though in the office of *poets*, they were to comply with the popular voice, and echo it back to the ears of ſovereignty; yet, as *men*, they had too much good ſenſe, and too nice a regard to the dignity of their characters, to exaggerate and go beyond it.

It ſhould, in all reaſon, ſurprize and diſguſt us ſtill more, that modern writers have not always ſhewn themſelves ſo diſcrete. The grave and learned LIPSIUS was not aſhamed, even without the convenient pretext of popular flattery, or poetic *coloring*, in ſo many words, to make a God of his patron: who, though neither King, nor Pope, was yet the next beſt material for this manufacture, an Archbiſhop. For, though the critic knew, that it was *not every wood, that will make a Mercury*, yet nobody would diſpute the fitneſs of that, which grew ſo near the altar. In plain words, I am ſpeaking of an Archbiſhop of MECHLIN, whom, after a deal of fulſome compliment, which was the vice of the man) he exalts at laſt, with a pagan complaiſance, into the order of Deities. "Ad haec, ſays "he, erga omnes humanitas & facilitas me faciunt, ut

[c] See a learned and accurate diſſertation on the ſubject in HIST. DE L'ACAD. DES INSCR. &c. tom. i.

" omnes te non tanquàm hominem aliquem de noſtro " coetu, ſed tanquam DEUM QUENDAM DE COELO DE- " LAPSUM INTUEANTUR ET ADMIRENTUR."

16. JURANDASQUE TUUM PER NOMEN PONIMUS ARAS.] On this idea of the APOTHEOSIS, which was the uſual mode of flattery in the Auguſtan age, but, as having the countenance of public authority, ſometimes inartificially enough employed, Virgil hath projected one of the nobleſt allegories in antient poetry, and at the ſame time hath given to it all the force of *juſt* compliment, the *occaſion* itſelf allowed. *Each* of theſe excellencies was to be expected from his talents. For, as his genius led him to the *ſublime*; ſo his exquiſite judgment would inſtruct him to palliate this bold fiction, and qualify, as much as poſſible, the ſhocking adulation, implied in it. So ſingular a beauty deſerves to be ſhewn at large.

The *third* GEORGIC ſets out with an apology for the low and ſimple argument of that work, which, yet, the poet eſteemed, for its novelty, preferable to the ſublimer, but trite, themes of the Greek writers. Not but he intended, on ſome future occaſion, to adorn a nobler ſubject. This was the great plan of the Æneïs, which he now *prefigures* and unfolds at large. For, taking advantage of the nobleſt privilege of his *art*, he breaks away, in a fit of *prophetic* enthuſiaſm, to predict his ſucceſſes in this projected enterprize, and, under the imagery of the antient *triumph*, which comprehends, or ſuggeſts to the imagination, whatever is moſt auguſt in human affairs, to delineate the future glories of this ambitious deſign. The whole conception, as we ſhall ſee, is of the utmoſt grandeur and magnificence; though, according to the uſual management of the poet (which, as not being apprehended by his critics, hath furniſhed occaſion, even to the beſt of them, to charge him with a want of the *ſublime*) he hath contrived to ſoften and *familiarize* its appearance to the reader, by the artful manner, in which it is introduced. It ſtands thus:

tentanda via eſt, qua me quoque poſſim
Tollere humo, VICTORQUE *virûm volitare per ora.*

This idea of *victory*, thus caſually dropped, he makes the

baſis of his imagery; which, by means of this gradual preparation, offers itſelf eaſily to the apprehenſion, though it, thereby, loſes, as the poet deſigned it ſhould, much of that *broad glare*, in which writers of leſs judgment love to ſhew their ideas, as tending to ſet the common reader at a gaze. The allegory then proceeds:

Primus ego in patriam mecum (modo vita ſuperſit)
Aonio rediens deducam vertice Muſas.

The projected conqueſt was no leſs than that of all the *Grecian Muſes* at once; whom, to carry on the decorum of the allegory, he threatens, 1. to force from their high and advantagious ſituation on the ſummit of the *Aonian mount*; and, 2. to bring *captive* with him into Italy; the *former* circumſtance intimating to us the difficulty and danger of the enterprize; and the *latter*, his complete execution of it.

The *palmy*, triumphal entry, which was uſual to victors on their return from foreign ſucceſſes, follows:

Primus Idumaeas referam tibi, Mantua, palmas.

But antient conquerors did not hold it ſufficient to reap this tranſient fruit of their labours. They were ambitious to conſecrate their glory to immortality, by a *temple*, or other public monument, which was to be built out of the ſpoils of the conquered cities or countries. This the reader ſees is ſuitable to the idea of the great work propoſed; which was, out of the old remains of Grecian art, to compoſe a *new* one, that ſhould comprize the virtues of all of them: as, in fact, the Æneïd is known to unite in itſelf whatever is moſt excellent, not in Homer only, but, univerſally, in the wits of Greece. The everlaſting monument of the *marble* temple is then reared:

Et viridi in campo templum de MARMORE *ponam.*

And, becauſe antient ſuperſtition uſually preferred, for theſe purpoſes, the banks of *rivers* to other ſituations, therefore the poet, in beautiful alluſion to the ſite of ſome of the moſt celebrated pagan temples, builds *his* on the MINCIUS. We ſee with what a ſcrupulous propriety the alluſion is carried on.

Propter aquam, tardis ingens ubi flexibus errat
MINCIUS, *et tenera praetexit arundine ripas.*

Next, this temple was to be dedicated, as a monument of the victor's *piety*, as well as glory, to ſome propitious, tutelary deity, under whoſe auſpices the great adventure had been atchieved. The *dedication* is then made to the poet's *divinity*, Auguſtus:

In medio mihi CAESAR *erit, templumque tenebit.*

TEMPLUM TENEBIT. The expreſſion is emphatical; as intimating to us, and prefiguring the ſecret purpoſe of the Æneïs, which was, in the perſon of Æneas, to ſhadow forth and conſecrate the character of Auguſtus. His divinity was to fill and *occupy* that great work. And the ample circuit and magnificence of the epic plan was projected only, as a more awful encloſure of that auguſt preſence, which was to *inhabit* and ſolemnize the vaſt round of this poetic building.

And now the wonderful addreſs of the poet's artifice appears. The mad ſervility of his country had *deified* the emperor in good earneſt: and his brother poets made no ſcruple to *worſhip* in his temples, and to come before him with handfuls of *real* incenſe, ſmoking from the altars. But the ſobriety of Virgil's adoration was of another caſt. He ſeizes this circumſtance only to *embody* a poetical fiction; which, on the ſuppoſition of an actual *deification*, hath all the force of compliment, which the *fact* implies, and yet, as preſented through the chaſt veil of allegory, eludes the monſtrous offence, which the *naked* recital muſt needs have given to decency and common ſenſe. Had the emperor's *popular* divinity been flatly acknowledged, and adored, the praiſe, even under Virgil's management, had been inſufferable for its extravagance; and, without ſome ſupport for his poetical *numen* to reſt upon, the figure had been more forced and ſtrained, than the rules of juſt writing allow. As it is, the hiſtorical truth of his *apotheoſis* authorizes and ſupports the *fiction*, and the fiction, in its turn, ſerves to refine and palliate the *hiſtory*.

The Æneïs being, by the poet's improvement of this circumſtance, thus naturally predicted under the image of a *temple*,

a *temple*, we may expect to find a close and studied analogy betwixt them. The great, component parts of the *one* will, do doubt, be made, very faithfully, to represent and adumbrate those of the *other*. This hath been executed with great art and diligence.

1. The *temple*, we observed, was erected on the banks of a river. This site was not only proper for the reason already mentioned, but also, for the further convenience of instituting *public games*, the ordinary attendants of the *consecration* of temples. These were generally, as in the case of the Olympic and others, celebrated on the banks of rivers.

Illi victor ego, et Tyrio conspectus in ostro,
Centum quadrijugos agitabo ad flumina currus.
Cuncta mihi, Alpheum linquens lucosque Molorchi,
Cursibus et crudo decernet Graecia caestu.

To see the propriety of the *figure* in this place, the reader needs only be reminded of the *book of games* in the Æneïd, which was purposely introduced in honour of the Emperor, and not, as is commonly thought, for a mere trial of skill between the poet and his master. The emperor was passionately fond of these sports, and was even the author, or restorer, of *one* of them. It is not be doubted, that he alludes also to the *quinquennial games*, actually celebrated, in honour of his temples, through many parts of the empire. And this the poet undertakes in the *civil* office of VICTOR.

2. What follows is in the *religious* office of PRIEST. For it is to be noted, that, in assuming this double character, which the decorum of the solemnities, here recounted, prescribed, the poet has an eye to the *political* design of the Æneïs, which was to do honour to Caesar, in either capacity of a *civil* and *religious* personage; both being essential to the idea of the perfect legislator, he was to adorn and recommend. The account of his *sacerdotal functions* is delivered in these words:

Ipse caput tonsae foliis ornatus olivae
Dona feram. Jam nunc solemnes ducere pompas
Ad delubra juvat, caesosque videre juvencos;

Vel ſcena ut verſis diſcedat frontibus, utque
Purpurea intexti tollant aulaea Britanni.

The imagery in this place cannot be underſtood, without reflecting on the cuſtomary form and diſpoſition of the pagan temples. DELUBRUM, or DELUBRA, for either *number* is uſed indifferently, denotes the ſhrine, or ſanctuary, wherein the ſtatue of the preſiding God was placed. This was in the centre of the building. Exactly before the *delubrum*, and at no great diſtance from it, was the ALTAR. Further, the ſhrine, or *delubrum*, was incloſed, and ſhut up on all ſides by *doors* of curious carved-work, and ductile *veils*, embelliſhed by the rich embroidery of *flowers*, *animals*, or *human figures*. This being obſerved, the progreſs of the imagery before us will be this. The proceſſion *ad delubra*, or ſhrine: the ſacrifice on the *altars*, erected before it: and, laſtly, the painted, or rather wrought *ſcenery* of the purple *veils*, incloſing the image, which were ornamented, and ſeemed to be ſuſtained or held up by the figures of *inwoven Britons*. The meaning of all which, is, that the poet would proceed to the celebration of Cæſar's praiſe in all the gradual, ſolemn preparation of poetic pomp: that he would render the moſt grateful *offerings* to his divinity in thoſe occaſional *epiſodes*, which he ſhould conſecrate to his more immediate honour: and, finally, that he would provide the richeſt texture of his fancy, for a covering to that admired *image* of his virtues, which was to make the ſovereign pride and glory of his poem. The choice of the *inwoven Britons*, for the ſupport of his *veil*, is well accounted for by thoſe, who tell us, that Auguſtus was proud to have a number of theſe to ſerve about him in quality of ſlaves.

The ornaments of the DOORS of this *delubrum*, on which the ſculptor uſed to laviſh all the riches of his *art*, are next delineated.

In foribus pugnam ex auro ſolidoque elephanto
Gangaridum faciam, victoriſque arma Quirini;
Atque hic undantem bello, magnumque fluentem
Nilum, ac navali ſurgentes aere columnas.

Addam

Addam urbes Aſiae domitas, pulſumque Niphatem,
Fidentemque fugâ Parthum verſiſque ſagittis;
Et duo rapta manu diverſo ex hoſte trophaea,
Biſque triumphatas utroque ex littore gentes.

Here the covering of the *figure* is too thin to hide the *literal* meaning from the commoneſt reader, who ſees, that the ſeveral triumphs of Cæſar, here recorded in *ſculpture*, are thoſe, which the poet hath taken moſt pains to *finiſh*, and hath occaſionally inſerted, as it were, in *miniature*, in ſeveral places of his *poem*. Let him only turn to the prophetic ſpeech of Anchiſes' ſhade in the VIth, and to the deſcription of the ſhield in the VIIIth book.

Hitherto we have contemplated the decorations of the *ſhrine*, i. e. ſuch as bear a more direct and immediate reference to the honour of Cæſar. We are now preſented with a view of the remoter, ſurrounding ornaments of the temple. Theſe are the illuſtrious Trojan chiefs, whoſe ſtory was to furniſh the materials, or, more properly, to form the body and *caſe*, as it were, of this auguſt ſtructure. They are alſo connected with the idol deity of the place by the cloſeſt ties of relationſhip, the Julian family affecting to derive its pedigree from this proud original. The poet then, in his arrangement of theſe additional figures, with admirable judgment, completes and rounds the entire fiction.

Stabunt & Parii lapides, ſpirantia ſigna,
Aſſaraci proles, demiſſaeque ab Jove gentis
Nomina: Troſque parens & Trojae Cynthius auctor.

Nothing now remains but for *fame* to eternize the glories of what the great architect had, at the expence of ſo much art and labour, completed; which is predicted, in the higheſt ſublime of antient poetry, under the idea of ENVY, whom the poet perſonalizes, ſhuddering at the view of ſuch tranſcendent perfection; and taſting, beforehand, the pains of a remedileſs vexation, ſtrongly pictured in the image of the worſt, infernal tortures.

INVIDIA *infelix furias amnemque ſeverum*
Cocyti metuet, tortoſque Ixionis angues,
Immanemque rotam, & non exuperabile ſaxum.

Thus

Thus have I preſumed, but with a religious awe, to inſpect and declare the myſteries of this ideal temple. The attempt after all might have been cenſured, as prophane, if the great *Myſtagogue* himſelf, or ſome body for him [d], had not given us the undoubted key to it. Under this en-

[d] In theſe lines,

Mox tamen ardentes accingar dicere pugnas
Caeſaris, & nomen famâ tot ferre per annos,
Tithoni primâ quot abeſt ab origine Caeſar.

Which I ſuſpect not to have been from the hand of Virgil. And,

1. On account of ſome *peculiarities in the expreſſion.*

Accingar is of frequent uſe in the beſt authors, to denote *a readineſs and reſolution to do any thing*; but as joined with an *infinitive mood*, *accingar dicere*, I do not remember to have ever ſeen it. 'Tis often uſed by Virgil, but, if the ſeveral places be conſulted, it will always be found with an *accuſative* and *preposition*, expreſſed, or underſtood, as *magicas accingier artes*, or with an *accuſative* and *dative*, as *accingere ſe praedae*, or laſtly, with an *ablative*, expreſſing the *inſtrument*, as *accingor ferro*. La Cerda, in his notes upon the place, ſeemed ſenſible of the objection, and therefore wrote, *Graeca locutio*: the common, but paltry, ſhift of learned critics, when they determine, at any rate, to ſupport an antient reading.

2. *Ardentes pugnas, burning battles,* ſounds well enough to a modern ear, but I much doubt, if it would have paſſed in the times of Virgil. A leaſt, I recollect no ſuch expreſſion in all his works; *ardens* being conſtantly joined to a word, denoting a *ſubſtance* of apparent *light, heat,* or *flame,* to which the alluſion is eaſy, as *ardentes gladios, ardentes oculos, campos armis ſublimibus ardentes,* and, by an eaſy metaphor, *ardentes boſtes,* but no where, that I can find, to ſo *abſtract* a notion, as that of *fight.* It ſeems to be to avoid this difficulty, that ſome have choſen to read *ardentis,* in the *genitive,* which yet Servius rejects as of no authority. 3. But the moſt glaring note of illegitimacy is in the line,

Tithoni primâ quot abeſt ab origine Caeſar.

It has puzzled all the commentators from old Servius down to Mr. Martyn, to give any tolerable account of the poet's choice of *Tithonus,* from whom to derive the anceſtry of Auguſtus, rather than *Anchiſes,* or *Aſſaracus,* who were not only more famous, but in the *direct* line. The pretences of any or all of them are too frivolous to make it neceſſary to ſpend a thought about them. The inſtance ſtands ſingle in antiquity; much leſs is there any thing like it to be found in the Auguſtan poets.

II. But the *phraſeology* of theſe lines is the leaſt of my objection. Were it ever ſo accurate, there is, beſides, on the firſt view, a manifeſt abſurdity in the *ſubject-matter* of them. For would any writer, of but common ſkill in the art of compoſition, cloſe a long and elaborate allegory, the principal grace of which conſiſts in its very myſtery, with a cold, and formal explanation of it? Or would he pay ſo poor a compliment to his patron, as to ſuppoſe his ſagacity wanted the aſſiſtance of this additional triplet to lead him into the true meaning? Nothing can be more abhorrent from the uſual addreſs and artifice of Virgil's manner. Or,

III. Were the *ſubject-matter* itſelf paſſable, yet, how, in defiance of all the laws of *diſpoſition,* came it to be *forced* in here? Let the reader turn to the

couragement

couragement I could not withſtand the temptation of diſcloſing thus much of one of the nobleſt fictions of anti-

paſſage, and he will ſoon perceive, that this could never be the *place* for it. The allegory being concluded, the poet returns to his ſubject, which is propoſed in the ſix following lines:

Interea Dryadum ſylvas, ſaltuſque ſequamur
Intactos, tua, Maecenas, haud mollia juſſa;
Te ſine nil altum mens inchoat: en age ſegnes
Rumpe moras: vocat ingenti clamore Cithaeron,
Taygetique canes, domitrixque Epidaurus equorum,
Et vox aſſenſu nemorum ingeminata remugit.

Would now any one expect, that the poet, after having conducted the reader, thus reſpectfully, to the very threſhold of his ſubject, ſhould immediately run away again to the point, from which he had ſet out, and this on ſo needleſs an errand, as the letting him into the ſecret of his allegory?

But this inſerted triplet agrees as ill with what *follows*, as with what *precedes* it. For how abrupt is the tranſition, and unlike the delicate connection, ſo ſtudiouſly contrived by the Auguſtan poets, from

Tithoni primâ quot abeſt ab origine Caeſar.
to
Seu quis Olympiacae miratur praemia palmae, &c.

When omit but theſe interpolated lines, and ſee how gracefully, and by how natural a ſucceſſion of ideas, the poet ſlides into the main of his ſubject.—

Interea Dryadum ſylvas ſaltuſque ſequamur
Intactos —
Te ſine nil —
Rumpe moras: vocat ingenti clamore Cithaeron
Taygetique canes, domitrixque Epidaurus EQUORUM,
Et vox aſſenſu nemorum ingeminata REMUGIT,
Seu quis Olympiacae miratus praemia palmae
Paſcit EQUOS; *ſeu quis fortes ad aratra* JUVENCOS:

On the whole, I have not the leaſt doubt, that the lines before us are the ſpurious offſpring of ſome *later poet*; if indeed the writer of them deſerve that name; for, whoever he was, he is ſo far from partaking of the original ſpirit of Virgil, that, at moſt, he appears to have been but a ſervile and paltry mimic of Ovid; from the opening of whoſe Matamorphoſis the deſign was clearly taken. The turn of the thought is evidently the ſame in both, and even the *expreſſion*. *Mutatas dicere formas* is echoed by *ardentes dicere pugnas: dicere fert animus*, is, by an affected improvement, *accingar dicere:* and *Tithoni primâ ab origine* is almoſt literally the ſame as *primâque ab origine mundi*. For the *inſertion* of theſe lines in this place, I leave it to the curious to conjecture of it, as they may; but in the mean time, muſt eſteem the office of the true *critic* to be ſo far reſembling that of the *poet* himſelf, as, within ſome proper limitations, to juſtify the *honeſt* liberty here taken.

Cum tabulis animum cenſoris ſumet honeſti;
Audebit quaecunque parum ſplendoris habebunt
Et ſine pondere erunt, & honore indigna feruntur,
VERBA MOVERE LOCO; QUAMVIS INVITA RECEDANT,
ET VERSENTER ADHUC INTRA PENETRALIA VESTAE.

[2 Ep. ii. 110.]

quity;

quity; and the rather, as the propriety of allegoric compoſition, which made the diſtinguiſhed pride of ancient poetry, ſeems but little known or attended to by the *modern* profeſſors of this fine art.

17. NIL ORITURUM ALIAS, NIL ORTUM TALE FATENTES.] *Il n'eſt impoſſible*, ſays M. DE BALZAC, in that puffed, declamatory rhapſody, intitled, LE PRINCE, *de reſiſter au mouvement interieur, qui me pouſſe. Je ne ſçaurois m'empecher de parler du* ROY, *& de ſa vertu; de crier à tous les princes, que c'eſt l'exemple, qu'ils doivent ſuivre*; DE DEMANDER A TOUS LES PEUPLES, ET A TOUS LES AGES, S'ILS ONT JAMAIS RIEN VEU DE SEMBLABLE. This was ſpoken of a king of France, who, it will be owned, had his virtues. But they were the virtues of the *man*, and not of the *Prince*. This, however, was a diſtinction, which the eloquent encomiaſt was not aware of, or, to ſpeak more truly, his buſineſs required him to overlook. For the whole elogy is worth peruſing, as it affords a ſtriking proof of the uniform genius of flattery, which, alike under all circumſtances, and indifferent to all characters, can hold the ſame language of the weakeſt, as the ableſt of princes, of LOUIS LE JUSTE, and CAESAR OCTAVIANUS AUGUSTUS.

23. SIC FAUTOR VETERUM, &c. to ℣ 28.] The folly, here ſatyrized, is common enough in all countries, and extends to all arts. It was juſt the ſame prepoſterous affectation of venerating antiquity, which put the connoiſſeurs in *painting*, under the emperors, on crying up the ſimple and rude ſketches of AGLAOPHON and POLYGNOTUS, above the exquiſite and finiſhed pictures of PARRHASIUS and ZEUXIS. The account is given by Quintilian, who, in his cenſure of this abſurdity, points to the undoubted ſource of it. His words are theſe: "Primi, "quorum quidem opera non vetuſtatis modò gratiâ viſendi "ſunt, clari pictores fuiſſe dicuntur Polygnotus & Aglao-"phon; quorum ſimplex color tam ſui ſtudioſos adhuc "habet, ut illa propè rudia ac velut futurae mox artis "primordia, maximis, qui poſt eos extiterunt, auctoribus "praeferantur, PROPRIO QUODAM INTELLIGENDI (ut

"mea

" mea fert opinio) AMBITU." [l. xii. c. 10.] The lover of painting muſt be the more ſuprized at this ſtrange *preference*, when he is told, that Aglaophon, at leaſt, had the uſe of only *one ſingle colour*; whereas Parrhaſius and Zeuxis, who are amongſt the *maximi autores*, here glanced at, not only employed *different colours*, but were exceedingly eminent, the one of them for *correct drawing*, *and the delicacy of his outline*; the *other*, for his *invention* of that great ſecret of the *chiaro-oſcuro*. " Poſt Zeuxis & Parrhaſius: " quorum prior LUMINUM UMBRARUMQUE INVENISSE " RATIONEM, ſecundus, EXAMINASSE SUBTILIUS " LINEAS DICITUR." [Ibid.]

28. SI, QUIA GRAIORUM SUNT ANTIQUISSIMA QUAEQUE SCRIPTA VEL OPTIMA, &c.] The common interpretation of this place ſuppoſes the poet to admit *the moſt antient of the Greek writings to be the beſt*. Which were even contrary to all experience and common ſenſe, and is directly confuted by the hiſtory of the Greek learning. What he allows is, the *ſuperiority* of the oldeſt Greek writings *extant*; which is a very different thing. The turn of his argument confines us to this ſenſe. For he would ſhew the folly of concluding the fame of the *old Roman* writers, on their *firſt* rude attempts to copy the finiſhed models of Greece, as of the *old Greek writers* themſelves, who were furniſhed with the means of producing thoſe *models* by long diſcipline and cultivation. This appears, certainly, from what follows:

Venimus ad ſummum fortunae: pingimus atque
Pſallimus & luctamur Achivis doctius unctis.

The deſign of which hath been entirely overlooked. For it hath been taken only for a *general expreſſion* of falſehood and abſurdity, of juſt the ſame import, as the proverbial line,

Nil intra eſt oleâ, nil extra eſt in nuce duri.

Whereas it was *deſignedly* pitched upon to convey a *particular illuſtration* of the very abſurdity in queſtion, and to ſhew the maintainers of it, from the nature of things, how ſenſeleſs their poſition was. It is to this purpoſe: " As " well may it be pretended, that we *Romans* ſurpaſs the

" *Greeks*

" *Greeks* in the arts of *painting*, *muſic*, *and the exerciſes of* " *the palæſtra*, which yet it is confeſſed, we do not, as " that our *old* writers ſurpaſs the *modern*. The abſurdity, " in either caſe, is the ſame. For, as the Greeks, who " had long devoted themſelves, with great and continued " application, to the practice of theſe arts (which is the " force of the epithet UNCTI, here given them) muſt, for " that reaſon, carry the prize from the Romans, who have " taken very little pains about them; ſo, the modern " Romans, who have for a long time been ſtudying the " *arts of poetry and compoſition*, muſt needs excel the old " Roman writers, who had little or no acquaintance with " thoſe arts, and had been trained, by no previous diſci- " pline, to the exerciſe of them."

The conciſeneſs of the expreſſion made it neceſſary to open the poet's ſenſe at large, which now comes out very good; and ſhews, his intention, in theſe two lines, was to expoſe, in the way of *argumentative illuſtration*, the ground of that abſurdity, which the preceding verſes had repreſented as, at firſt ſight, ſo ſhocking to *common ſenſe*.

33. UNCTIS.] This is by no means a general, unmeaning epithet: but is beautifully choſen to expreſs the unwearied *aſſiduity* of the Greek artiſts. For the practice of *anointing* being eſſential to their agoniſtic trials, the poet elegantly puts the attending *circumſtance* for the *thing* itſelf. And ſo, in ſpeaking of them, as UNCTI, he does the ſame, as if he had called them " the induſtrious, or *exerciſing* " Greeks;" which was the very idea his argument required him to ſuggeſt to us.

54. ADEO SANCTUM EST VETUS OMNE POEMA.] The reader is not to ſuppoſe, that Horace, in this ridicule of the fooliſh adorers of antiquity, intended any contempt of the old Roman poets; who, as the old writers in every country, abound in ſtrong ſenſe, vigorous expreſſion, and the trueſt repreſentation of life and manners. His quarrel is only with the critic:

Qui redit in faſtos & virtutem aeſtimat annis.

An affectation, which for its *folly*, if it had not too apparently

parently ſprung from a worſe principle, deſerved to be laughed at.

For the reſt, he every where diſcovers a candid and juſt eſteem of their earlier writers; as may be ſeen from many places in this very epiſtle; but more eſpecially from that ſevere cenſure in 1 S. x. 17. (which hath more of acrimony in it, than he uſually allows to his ſatyr) when, in ſpeaking of the writers of the old comedy, he adds,

Quos neque pulcher
Hermogenes unquam legit, neque ſimius iſte
Nil praeter Calvum & doctus cantare Catullum.

With all his zeal for correct writing, he was not, we ſee, of the humour of that delicate ſort, who are for burning their old poets; and, to be well with women and court-critics, confine their reading and admiration to the innocent ſing-ſong of ſome ſoft and faſhionable rhymer, whoſe utter inſipidity is a thouſand times more inſufferable, than any barbariſm.

59. VINCERE CAECILIUS GRAVITATE, TERENTIUS ARTE.] It ſhould be obſerved, that the judgment, here paſſed [from ℣ 55 to 60] on the moſt celebrated Roman writers, being only a repreſentation of the *popular* opinion, not of the poet's *own*, the commendations, given to them, are deſerved, or otherwiſe, juſt as it chances.

Interdum volgus rectum videt, eſt ubi peccat.

To give an inſtance of this in the line before us.

A critic of unqueſtioned authority acquaints us, wherein the *real diſtinct merit* of theſe two dramatic writers conſiſts. "In ARGUMENTIS, Caecilius palmam poſcit; in "ETHESIN, TERENTIUS." [Varro.] Now by *gravitate*, as applied to Cæcilius, we may properly enough underſtand the *grave and affecting caſt* of his comedy; which is further confirmed by what the ſame critic elſewhere obſerves of him. "PATHE Trabea, Attilius, & CAECI-"LIUS facile moverunt." But Terence's characteriſtic of *painting the manners*, which is, plainly, the right interpretation of Varro's ETHESIN, is not ſo ſignificantly expreſſed by the attribute *arte*, here given to him. The word indeed is of large and general import, and may admit

of

of various ſenſes; but being here applied to a *dramatic* writer, it moſt naturally and properly denotes the *peculiar* art of his profeſſion, that is, *the artificial contexture of the plot*. And this I doubt not was the very praiſe, the town-critics of Horace's time intended to beſtow on this poet. The matter is eaſily explained.

The ſimplicity and exact unity of the plots in the Greek comedies would be, of courſe, unintereſting to a people, not throughly inſtructed in the genuin beauties of the drama. They had a thinneſs and ſubtlety, which would by no means content the groſs and lumpiſh taſte of a Roman auditory. To gratify their impatient curioſity with more matter, the Latin poets, therefore, bethought themſelves of combining two ſtories into one. And this, which is what we call the *double plot*, affording the opportunity of more incidents, and a greater variety of *action*, was perfectly ſuited to their humour. But, of all the Latin Comedians, *Terence* appears to have practiſed this ſecret moſt aſſiduouſly: at leaſt, as may be concluded from what remains of them. *Plautus* hath very frequently *ſingle plots*, which he was enabled to ſupport by, what was natural to him, a force of buffoon pleaſantry. *Terence*, whoſe genius lay another way, or whoſe taſte was abhorrent from ſuch ribaldry, had recourſe to the other expedient of *double plots*. And this, I ſuppoſe is what gained him the popular reputation of being the moſt *artificial* writer for the ſtage. The HECYRA is the only one of his comedies, of the true antient caſt. And we know how it came off in the repreſentation. That ill-ſucceſs and the ſimplicity of its conduct have continued to draw upon it the ſame unfavourable treatment from the critics, to this day; who conſtantly ſpeak of it, as much inferior to the reſt; whereas, for the genuin beauty of dramatic deſign and the obſervance, after the antient Greek manner, of the nice dependency and coherence of the *fable*, throughout, it is, indiſputably, to every reader of true taſte, the moſt maſterly and exquiſite of the whole collection.

63. INTERDUM VOLGUS RECTUM VIDET: EST UBI PECCAT.] The capricious levity of *popular opinion* hath

hath been noted even to a proverb. And yet it is this, which, after all, *fixes* the fate of authors. This ſeemingly odd phænomenon I would thus account for.

What is uſually complimented with the high and reverend appellation of *public judgment* is, in any ſingle inſtance, but the repetition or echo, for the moſt part eagerly catched and ſtrongly reverberated on all ſides, of a few leading voices, which have happened to gain the confidence, and ſo direct the *opening* of the whole pack. But, as, in fact, it too often falls out, this prerogative of the *few* may be abuſed to the prejudice of the *many*. The partialities of friendſhip, the faſhionableneſs of the writer, his compliance with the reigning taſte, the lucky concurrence of time and opportunity, the cabal of a party, nay, the very freaks of whim and caprice, theſe, or any of them, as occaſion ſerves, can ſupport the dulleſt, as the oppoſite diſadvantages can depreſs the nobleſt performance; and give a currency or neglect to *either*, far beyond what the genuin character of each demands. Hence the *public voice*, which is but the aggregate of theſe corrupt judgments, infinitely multiplied, is, with the wiſe, at ſuch a juncture, deſervedly of little eſteem. Yet, in a ſucceſſion of ſuch *judgments*, delivered at different times and by different ſets or juntos of theſe ſovereign arbiters of the fate of authors, the public opinion naturally gets clear of theſe accidental corruptions. Every freſh ſucceſſion ſhakes off ſome; till, by degrees, the work is ſeen in its proper form, unſupported of every other recommendation, than what its native inherent excellence beſtows upon it. Then, and not till then, *the voice of the people* becomes ſacred; after which it ſoon advances into *divinity*, before which all ages muſt fall down and worſhip. For now reaſon alone, without her corrupt aſſeſſors, takes the chair. And her ſentence, when once promulgated and authorized by the general voice, fixes the unalterable doom of authors. ΟΛΩΣ ΚΑΛΑ ΝΟΜΙΖΕ ΤΥΧΗ ΚΑΙ ΑΛΗΘΙΝΑ, ΤΑ ΔΙΑΠΑΝΤΟΣ ΑΡΕΣΧΟΝΤΑ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΣΙΝ [Longinus § vii.] And the reaſon follows, agreeably to the account, here given. Ὅταν γὰρ τοῖς ἀπὸ διαφόρων ΕΠΙΤΗΔΕΥ-

ΜΑΤΩΝ, ΒΙΩΝ, ΖΗΛΩΝ, ΗΛΙΚΙΩΝ, λόγων ἔν τι καὶ ταυτὸν ἅμα περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν ἅπασι δοκῇ, τόθ' ἡ ἐξ ἀσυμφώνων ὡς κρίσις καὶ συγκαλάθεσις τιλὼ ἐπὶ τῷ θαυμαζομένῳ ΠΙΣΤΙΝ ΙΣΧΥΡΑΝ ΛΑΜΒΑΝΕΙ ΚΑΙ ΑΝΑΜΦΙΛΕΚΤΟΝ. [Ibid.]

This is the true account of *popular fame*, which, while it well explains the ground of the poet's aphoriſm, ſuggeſts an obvious remark, but very mortifying to every candidate of literary glory. It is, that, whether he ſucceeds in his endeavours after public applauſe, or not, *fame* is equally out of his reach, and, as the moral poet teaches, *a thing beyond him, even before his death*, on either ſuppoſition. For at the very time, that this bewitching muſic is ſounding in his ears, he can never be ſure, if, inſtead of the divine conſentient harmony of a juſt praiſe, it be not only the diſcordant din and clamour of ignorance or prepoſſeſſion.

If there be any exception to this melancholy truth, it muſt be in the caſe of ſome uncommon genius, whoſe ſuperior power burſts all impediments in his road to fame, and forces applauſe even from thoſe very prejudices, that would obſtruct his career to it. It was the rare felicity of the poet, juſt mentioned, to receive, in his life-time, this ſure and pleaſing augury of immortality.

84. TURPE PUTANT PARERE MINORIBUS, ET QUAE IMBERBI DIDICERE, SENES PERDENDA FATERI.] If any thing can account for this bigotted attachment to antient *poſſeſſions*, it muſt be, one would think, *the greatneſs of the emolument* ariſing from them, or *the virtuous labour and induſtry*, through which they were acquired.

Neither of theſe pretences, the reader will find, takes place in the two memorable inſtances of *bearded* bigotry, which follow.

About the middle of the XVIth Century, the dominion, which the letter K had ſome how uſurped, and, for time immemorial, held, in the French pronunciation of the Latin tongue, began, firſt, to be called in queſtion. Till then the *power* of the letter Q had been ſunk in it; *quantus*, *qualis*, *quiſquis*, &c. having been uniformly, and, as

far as the learned of that time could determine, *rightfully* called KANTUS, KALIS, and KISKIS. The bold adventurous ſpirit of P. RAMUS, was at the bottom of this defiance of antient and reverend preſcription. And no wonder, that HE, who had already raiſed a rebellion againſt ARISTOTLE, and in *him*, againſt all the *living* learned of thoſe days, ſhould call in queſtion the ſovereignty of a *dead* letter. As it ſometimes happens, this factious humour ſpread itſelf faſter and farther, than the pacific and well-diſpoſed could have wiſhed. Amongſt others, it ſeized upon a confident, well-beneficed eccleſiaſtic, who had the hardineſs to cry QUISQUIS in the very face of the SORBONNE. A little ſeaſonable ſeverity, on the firſt diſcovery of a traiterous combination, politicians have obſerved, does well. Our wiſe doctors went on that principle, though with eccleſiaſtical lenity, and only got the meddling prieſt deprived of his ample benefices. Which was ſo far from humbling him, that he appealed from their tribunal to a higher. The matter was brought before the parliament of Paris. And now it was, that the author of this peſtilent miſchief, firſt, came into ſight. RAMUS and his compeers, the king's profeſſors, whom he had found means to corrupt and draw over into this conſpiracy, made the cauſe of this bold aſſociate their own, and flew in a body to the parliament-houſe, and employed their utmoſt credit and authority in his favour. Whether it was, that there had been ſome previous tampering within doors, authors do not inform us; but the event leaves room for ſuſpicion. For, though the fact was clearly proved, and every body expected the judgment of the SORBONNE to be ratified, as in the caſe of ARISTOTLE, by public authority, yet ſo it happened, that, after long and vehement conteſtation, in which the learning and eloquence of the *ſacred* college had no doubt ſignally exerted themſelves, the Senate, upon what reaſonable motives does not appear, abſolved the criminal from his ſentence of *deprivation*. The evil was now become remedileſs. And all good people could only lament, that their governors had, by this improvident act of mercy, authorized and eſtabliſhed, as in fact it proved to be the caſe, this fatal grammatical hereſy, not in the *Royal*

College only, but through all the ſchools and academies of FRANCE.

But there was ſmall need of looking *abroad* for this example of *literary* ſuperſtition. The ſame tragedy was a little earlier, acted, *here*, amongſt ourſelves, with like circumſtance and cataſtrophe. CHEKE was the Ramus of ENGLAND. He, too, was a King's profeſſor, and had his party in *Cambridge*, where he taught, as the other had in *Paris*. He was alſo of the ſame ſpirit with his brother on the continent, as appears from that raſh and dangerous tenet, publicly avowed by him, "That a ſcholar might as "well pretend to hold a red hot coal in his mouth, as keep "a true or a witty thing to himſelf; and that nothing was "ſo painful to great and enterprizing ſpirits, as, amidſt a "thick confuſion of errors, to be denied the liberty of "ſearching out the truth [e]." It was this reſtleſs humour of *inquiry after truth*, and the impatience of concealing it, when found, which puſhed our forward profeſſor on the deſign of doing that, in regard to the Greek alphabet, which Ramus had projected in the caſe of a ſingle Roman letter; that is, of reſtoring all the *elements* of that language to their juſt and antient *power* in pronuntiation. As his pretenſions, however, were higher and more aſſuming than the Frenchman's, it was but fitting he ſhould meet with a ſtronger check, which he accordingly found in the Pontific Might of Biſhop GARDINER. This Prelate ſaw, as well as the Sorbonne, that ſuch preſumption was, on no account, to be ſuffered. It was a public inſult upon reverend cuſtom: *gave juſt ſcandal to the graver and elder part of the univerſity: and inſpired the youth with a ſaucy petulance and contempt of their ſuperiors* [f]. Beſides, they who dared to innovate in one point, *might*, in another. The free exerciſe of private opinion, productive of ſo many evils, was, therefore, on no pretence, to be tolerated. It was

[e] Quod difficilius non ſit SAPIENTI ARDENTEM CARBONEM ORE SERVARE, quàm bonum dictum aut verum tenere, & moleſtiſſimum ſit ingeniis magnis & celeribus, in magnâ errorum confuſione, NON, QUID SIT VERISSIMUM, EXQUIRERE. [De pronuntiat. ling. Graec. p. 98.]

[f] Juventuti accreſcit arrogantia & contemptus. Senes juvenilem temeritatem non ferunt. Et prout quiſque doctiſſimus eſt, ita maxime indignatur verum à falſo tam validè impugnari, tantâ cum pertinaciâ, &c. p. 16.

even

even better, in the judgment of this reſpectable prelate, *that the entire Greek language, with its ſounds, ſhould be for ever baniſhed the univerſity*[g], than that ſuch dreadful miſchiefs ſhould be ſuffered to take place. Fortunately, for the intereſts of the *old*, that is, the *true* pronuntiation, the biſhop had the means of correction in his own hands. For his office of Chancellor in the Univerſity gave him, it ſeems, the privilege of ſuppreſſing this baleful novelty, by a ſimple edict, at once. It accordingly came forth, under the ſtyle and title of EDICTUM STEPHANI VINTONIENSIS EPISCOPI CANCELLARII CANTABRIGIENSIS DE PRONUNTIATIONE LINGUAE GRAECAE ET LATINAE. And the tenor of it was IN SONIS OMNINO NE PHILOSOPHATOR. SED UTITOR PRAESENTIBUS. QUISQUIS NOSTRAM POTESTATEM AGNOSCIS, SONOS LITERIS SIVE GRAECIS SIVE LATINIS AB USU PUBLICO PRAESENTIS SAECULI ALIENOS PRIVATO JUDICIO AFFINGERE NE AUDETO. And, that it might be ſure to take effect, all this was enjoined *on pain of* WHIPPING, DEGRADATION, OR EXPULSION, *according to the age, rank, or degree of the reſpective offenders.*

This thundering edict of the biſhop ſtruck every bold Greek with terror. It was in vain for CHEKE to defend himſelf againſt it by arguments or authorities. The *firſt*, as might be foreſeen, incenſed his reſentment. And the *latter*, conſiſting of ſuch unheard of names, as SMITH, PONET, PICKERING, ASCHAM, &c. provoked his contempt. 'Tis true, the offender had no preferments to be deprived of. Yet how ſore a puniſhment *mere reſtraint* was to the unquiet ſpirit of this reformer, may be ſeen from what he tells the biſhop, *That, though, as it was in his power, his Lordſhip ſhould confer ever ſo many favours upon him, and even promote him to the richeſt benefices in the Church, he ſhould eſteem ſuch promotion of leſs value, than the recovery of that liberty, he had ſo unhappily loſt*[h]. Such

[g] Praeſtiterit multo LINGUAM GRAECAM CUM SUIS SONIS EXULARE OMNINO, quàm ut juventus, te praeceptore, ARROGANTIAM, TEMERITATEM & VANITATEM imbibat. [Ibid. p. 338.]

[h] Cum autèm innumeris me beneficiis poſſes afficere, tamen ſi multis magniſque ad vitam degendam praeſidiis me ſublevares & OPTIMA PLENISSIMAQUE SACERDOTIA tribueres, ut nunc ſum certè, quanquam illa, ſicut

an unreaſonable fondneſs for one's own humour the wiſe Chancellor held of very pernicious example. He inſiſted, therefore, highly on his authority, which was, of neceſſity, to be complied with. Yet, to ſee how fully the event juſtified him in this hatred and perſecution of encroaching novelty, the *new pronunciation*, though checked, for a time, by this rigor, yet ſecretly made a progreſs amongſt the young and unexperienced, and, through the obſtinate uncontroulable humour of innovation, became by degrees, in ſpite of all oppoſition to it, the prevailing mode in the Univerſities of England, and ſo continues to this day.

The moral of the tale is ſummed up in that earneſt expoſtulation of the good biſhop, who, on the firſt news of this enormity, cried out, and with reaſon, *Quid non mortalia pectora cogis*, VERI QUAERENDI FAMES? [p. 12.]

88. INGENIIS NON ILLE FAVET, &c.] MALHERBE was to the French, pretty much what HORACE had been to the Latin, poetry. Theſe great writers had, each of them, reſcued the lyric muſe of their country out of the rude, ungracious hands of their old poets. And, as their talents of a *good ear*, *elegant judgment*, and *correct expreſſion*, were the ſame, they preſented her to the public in all the air and grace, and yet *ſeverity*, of beauty, of which her form was ſuſceptible. Their merits and pretenſions being thus far reſembling, the reader may not be incurious to know the fate and fortune of *each*. *Horace* hath very frankly told us, what befel himſelf from the malevolent and low paſſions of his countrymen. *Malherbe* did not come off, with the wits and critics of his time, much better; as we learn from an excellent perſon, who hath very warmly recommended his writings. Speaking of the envy, which purſued him in his *proſe-works*, but, ſays he, "Comme "il faiſoit une particuliere profeſſion de la *poeſie*, c'eſt en "cette qualité qu'il a de plus ſeveres cenſeurs, & receu des "injuſtices plus ſignalées. Mais il me ſemble que je "fermerai la bouche à ceux, qui le blament, quand je leur

debeo, omnia magni aeſtimem, plus me obſtrictum obligatumque teneres, ſi hic me LIBERUM SOLUTUMQUE eſſe patereris. [p. 343.]

"aurai

" aurai monſtré, que ſa façon d'eſcrire eſt excellente, quoi-
" qu' elle s'eloigne un peu de celle des NOS ANCIENS
" POETES, QU' ILS LOUENT PLUSTOT PAR UN DE-
" GOUST DES CHOSES PRESENTES, QUE PAR LES SEN-
" TIMENTS D'UNE VERITABLE ESTIME." [DISC. DE M. GODEAU SUR LES OEUVRES DE M. DE MALHERBE.]

97. SUSPENDIT MENTEM VULTUMQUE.] The expreſſion hath great elegance, and is not liable to the imputation of *harſh, or improper conſtruction.* For *ſuſpendit* is not taken, with regard either to *mentem*, or *vultum* in its *literal*, but *figurative*, ſignification; and, thus, it becomes, in one and the *ſame* ſenſe, applicable to *both*.

Otherwiſe, this way of coupling *two ſubſtantives* to a *verb*, which does not, in ſtrict grammatical uſage, *govern* both; or, if it doth, muſt needs be conſtrued in different ſenſes; hath given juſt offence to the beſt critics.

Mr. Pope cenſures a paſſage of this kind, in the *Iliad*, with ſeverity, and thinks *the taſte of the antients was, in general, too good for theſe fooleries*[1].

Mr. Addiſon is perfectly of the ſame mind, as appears from his criticiſm on that line in Ovid, *Conſiliis, non curribus utere noſtris.* " This way of joining, ſays he, two ſuch
" different ideas as chariot and counſel to the ſame verb,
" is mightily uſed by *Ovid*, but is a very low kind of wit,
" and has always in it a mixture of *pun*; becauſe the verb
" muſt be taken in a different ſenſe, when it is joined with
" one of the things, from what it has in conjunction with
" the other. Thus in the end of this ſtory he tells you,
" that Jupiter flung a thunderbolt at Phaëton: *pariterque*
" *animaque rotiſque expulit aurigam:* where he makes a
" forced piece of *Latin (animâ expulit aurigam)* that he
" may couple the ſoul and the wheels to the ſame verb[k]."

Theſe the reader will think are pretty good authorities. For, in matters of *taſte*, I know of none, that more deſerve to be regarded. The *mere verbal critic*, one would think, ſhould be cautious, how he oppoſed himſelf to them. And yet a very learned Dutchman, who has taken great

[1] [B. IX. ℣ 641.] [k] *Notes on the ſtory of Phaëton.* [℣ 23.]

pains in *elucidating* an old Greek love-ſtory, which, with its more paſſionate admirers, may, perhaps, paſs for the MARIANNE of antiquity, hath not ſcrupled to cenſure this deciſion of their's very ſharply [l].

Having tranſcribed the cenſure of Mr. Pope, who indeed, ſomewhat too haſtily, goes ſo far as to ſuſpect the line in Homer for an Interpolation, our critic faſtens upon him directly. EN COR ZENODOTI, EN JECUR CRATETIS! But foul language and fair criticiſm are different things; and what he offers of the *latter* rather accounts for, than juſtifies the *former*. All he ſays on the ſubject, is in the good old way of *authorities*, which he diligently rakes together out of every corner of Greek and Roman antiquity. From all theſe he concludes, as he thinks, irreſiſtibly, not that the paſſage in queſtion *might* be *genuin* (for that few would diſpute with him) but that the kind of expreſſion itſelf is a *real beauty*. *Bona elocutio eſt: honeſta figura*. Though, to the praiſe of his diſcretion be it remembered, he does not even venture on this aſſertion, without his uſual ſupport of *precedent*. And, for want of a better, he takes up with old *Servius*. For ſo, it ſeems, this grammarian hath declared himſelf, with reſpect to ſome expreſſions of the ſame kind in *Virgil*.

But let him make the beſt of his authorities. And, when he has done that, I ſhall take the liberty to aſſure him, that the perſons, he contends againſt, do not think themſelves, in the leaſt, concerned with them. For, tho' he believes it an undeniable maxim, *Critici non eſſe inquirere, utrum recte autor quid ſcripſerit, ſed an omnino ſic ſcripſerit* [m]; yet, in the caſe before us, he muſt not be ſurprized, if others do not ſo conceive of it.

Indeed, where the critic would defend the *authenticity* of a word or expreſſion, the way of *precedent* is, doubtleſs, the very beſt, that common ſenſe allows to be taken. For the evidence of *fact*, at once, bears down all ſuſpicion of *corruption* or *interpolation*. Again; if the *elegance* of ſingle words (or of entire phraſes, where the ſuſpicion turns on the *oddity or uncommoneſs of the conſtruction*, only) be the

[l] JACOBI PHILLIPPI D'ORVILLE *Animadverſiones in* CHARIT. APHROD. lib. iv. c. 4. [m] Vol. ii. p. 395.

matter

matter in diſpute, full and preciſe authorities muſt decide it. For *elegance*, here, means nothing elſe but the practice of the beſt writers. And thus far I would join iſſue with the learned cenſurer; and ſhould think he did well in preſcribing this rule to himſelf in the correction of *approved antient authors*.

But what have theſe caſes to do with the point in queſtion? The objection is made, not to *words*, which alone are capable of being juſtified by authority, but to *things*, which muſt ever be what they are, in ſpite of it. This mode of writing is ſhewn to be fundamentally defective for reaſons taken from *the nature of our ideas, and the end and genius of the nobler forms of compoſition*. And what is it to tell us, that great writers have overlooked or neglected them?

1. In our cuſtomary train of *thinking*, the mind is carried along, *in ſucceſſion*, from *one* clear and diſtinct idea to *another*. Or, if the attention be, *at once*, employed on *two ſenſes*, there is ever ſuch a cloſe and near analogy betwixt them, that the perceptive faculty, eaſily and almoſt inſtantaneouſly paſſing from the one to the other, is not divided in its regards betwixt them, but even ſeems to itſelf to conſider them, as *one*: as is the caſe with *metaphor*; and, univerſally, with all the juſt forms of *alluſion*. The union between the *literal* and *figurative* ſenſe is ſo ſtrict, that they run together in the imagination; and the effect of the *figure* is only to pour in freſh light and luſtre on the *literal* meaning. But now, when *two different, unconnected ideas* are obtruded, at the ſame time, upon us, the mind ſuffers a kind of violence and diſtraction, and is thereby put out of that natural ſtate, in which it ſo much delights. To take the learned writer's inſtance from Polybius: ΕΛΠΙΔΑ ϗ ΚΕΙΡΑ ΠΡΟΣΛΑΜΒΑΝΕΙΝ. How different is the idea of *collecting forces*, and of that *act* of the mind, which we call *taking courage!* Theſe two *perceptions* are not only diſtinct from each other, but totally unconnected by any *natural* bond of relationſhip betwixt them. And yet the word ΠΡΟΣΛΑΜΒΑΝΕΙΝ muſt be ſeen in this double view, before we can take the full meaning of the hiſtorian.

2. This

2. This conjunction of *unrelated* ideas, by the means of a *common term*, agrees as ill to the *end and genius of the writer's compoſition*, as *the natural bent and conſtitution of the mind.* For the queſtion is only about the *greater poetry*, which addreſſes itſelf to the PASSIONS, or IMAGINATION. And, in either caſe, this play of words, which Mr. Pope condemns, muſt be highly out of ſeaſon.

When we are neceſſitated, as it were, to look different ways, and actually to contemplate two unconnected ſignifications of the ſame word, before we can thoroughly comprehend its purpoſe, the mind is more amuſed by this fanciful conjunction of ideas, than is conſiſtent with the artleſs, undeſigning ſimplicity of *paſſion.* It diſturbs and interrupts the flow of *affection*, by preſenting this diſparted image to the *fancy*. Again; where *fancy* itſelf is ſolely addreſſed, as in the *nobler deſcriptive ſpecies*, this arbitrary aſſemblage of ideas is not leſs improper. For the poet's buſineſs is, now, to aſtoniſh or entertain the mind with a ſucceſſion of *great* or *beautiful* images. And the intervention of this juggler's trick diverts the thought from contemplating its proper ſcenery. We ſhould be admiring ſome glorious repreſentation of *nature*, and are ſtopped, on a ſudden, to obſerve the writer's *art*, whoſe ingenuity can fetch, out of one word, two ſuch foreign and diſcrepant meanings.

In the lighter forms of poetry, indeed, and more eſpecially in the *burleſque epic*, this affectation has its *place*; as in that line of Mr. Pope, quoted by this critic;

ſometimes counſel takes, *and ſometimes tea.*

For 1. The writer's intention is, here, not to *affect the paſſions*, or *tranſport the fancy*, but ſolely to *divert and amuſe.* And to ſuch *end* this ſpecies of trifling is very appoſite. 2. The *manner*, which the burleſque epic takes to divert, is by confounding *great things with ſmall.* A *mode of ſpeech* then, which favours ſuch *confuſion*, is directly to its purpoſe. 3. This poem is, by its nature, *ſatyrical*, and, like the *old comedy*, delights in expoſing the faults and vices of *compoſition.* So that the *expreſſion* is, here, properly employed (and this was, perhaps, the *firſt*

view

view of the writer) to ridicule the uſe of it in *grave works*. If M. *D'Orville* then could ſeriouſly deſign to confute Mr. Pope's criticiſm by his own practice in that line of the *Rape of the Lock*, he has only ſhewn, that he does not, in the leaſt, comprehend the real genius of this poem. But to return:

There is, as appears to me, but one caſe, in which this *double ſenſe* of words can be admitted in ſerious poetry. It is, when, beſides the plain literal meaning, which the context demands, the mind is carried forward to ſome more illuſtrious and important object. We have an inſtance in the famous line of Virgil,

Attollens humeris famamque & fata nepotum,

But this is ſo far from contradicting, that it furthers, the writer's proper intention. We are not called off from the *ſubject-matter* to the obſervation of a *conceit*, but to the admiration of *kindred* ſublime conceptions. For even here, it is to be obſerved, there is always required ſome previous dependency and relationſhip, though not extremely obvious, in the natures of the things themſelves, whereon to ground and juſtify the analogy. Otherwiſe, the intention of the *double ſenſe* is perfectly inexcuſable [n].

What has been here ſaid, holds of *the conſtruction of a ſingle term in two ſenſes*, even though its authorized uſage may equally admit *both*. So that I cannot be of a mind with the learned critic's *wiſe men* [o]; *who acknowledge an extreme elegance in this form, when the governing verb equally correſponds to the two ſubſtantives*. But when it properly can be applied but to *one* of them, and with ſome force and ſtraining only, to the *ſecond*, as commonly happens with the application of *one verb to two ſubſtantives*, it then degenerates, as Mr. Addiſon obſerves, into a mere *quibble*, and is utterly incompatible with the graver forms of compoſition. And for this we have the concurrent authority of the *cordati* themſelves, who readily admit, *duram admodum & καλαχρησικωλέρειν fieri orationem, ſi verbum hoc ab alterutro abhorreat* [p]. Without ſoftening mat-

[n] See this curious point explaned by the true critic. D. L. vol. ii. p. 644.

[o] At inſpiciamus porrò, quid alii, *quibus cor rectius ſapit*, de hoc loquendi modo CENSUERINT. Agnoſcunt enim, &c. p. 399.

[p] Ibid.

ters,

ters, beſides the former abſurdity of *a ſecond ſenſe* we are now indebted to a forced and barbarous conſtruction for *any* ſecond ſenſe *at all*.

But ſurely this venerable bench of critics, to whom our cenſurer thinks fit to make his ſolemn appeal, were not aware of the imprudence of this conceſſion. For why, if one may preſume to aſk, is the *latter* uſe of this *figure* condemned, but for reaſons, which ſhew the manifeſt abſurdity of the thing, however countenanced by authorities? And is not this the caſe of the *former*? Or, is the tranſgreſſion of the ſtanding rules of *good ſenſe*, in the judgment of theſe *cenſors*, a more pardonable crime in a writer, than of *common uſage or grammar*?

After all, ſince he lays ſo great ſtreſs on his *authorities*, it may not be amiſs to conſider the proper force and weight of them.

The form of ſpeaking under conſideration has been cenſured as a *trifling*, *affected witticiſm*. This *cenſure* he hopes entirely to elude by ſhewing it was in uſe, more eſpecially amongſt two ſorts of perſons, the leaſt likely to be infected with *wrong taſte*, the *oldeſt*, that is to ſay, *the ſimpleſt*; and the moſt *refined*, writers. In ſhort, he thinks to ſtop all mouths by alledging inſtances from *Homer* and *Virgil*.

But what if Homer and Virgil in the few examples of this kind to be met with in their writings have *erred*? And, which is more, what if that very *ſimplicity* on the one hand, and *refinement* on the other, which he builds ſo much upon, can be ſhewn to be the *natural* and almoſt neceſſary *occaſions* of their falling into ſuch *errors*? This, I am perſuaded, was the truth of the caſe. For,

1. In the *ſimpler ages of learning*, when, as yet, compoſition is not turned into an *art*, but every writer, eſpecially of vehement and impetuous genius, is contented to put down his *firſt thoughts*, and, for their *expreſſion*, takes up with the moſt obvious words and phraſes, that preſent themſelves to him, this improper conſtruction will not be unfrequent. For the writer, who is not knowing enough to take offence at theſe niceties, having an immediate occaſion to expreſs *two things*, and finding *one word*, which, in

in common uſage, at leaſt with a little ſtraining, extends to *both*, he looks no further, but, as ſuſpecting no fault, employs it without ſcruple. And I am the more confirmed in this account, from obſerving, that ſometimes, where the governing *verb* cannot be made to bear this double ſenſe, and yet the meaning of the writer is clear enough from the context, the proper word is altogether omitted. Of this kind are ſeveral of the *modes of ſpeaking*, alledged by this writer as inſtances of the *double ſenſe*. As in that of Sophocles [q], where Electra, giving orders to Chryſothemis about the diſpoſal of the *libations*, deſtined for the tomb of her father, delivers herſelf thus,

ΑΛΛ' ἢ ΠΝΟΑΙΣΙΝ, ἢ βαθυσκαφεῖ ΚΟΝΕΙ
ΚΡΥΨΟΝ νιν.

The writer's firſt intention was to look out for ſome ſuch *verb*, as would equally correſpond to πνοαῖς and κόνει, but this not occurring, he ſets down one, that only agrees to the laſt, and leaves the other to be underſtood or ſupplied by the reader; as it eaſily might, the ſcope of the place neceſſarily directing him to it. It cannot be ſuppoſed, that Sophocles deſigned to ſay, κρύψον πνοαῖς. There is no affinity of *ſenſe* or *ſound* to lead him to ſuch conſtruction. Again: in that verſe of Homer [r],

ἸΠΠΟΙ αἐρσίποδες καὶ ποικίλα ΤΕΥΧΕ', ΕΚΕΙΤΟ.

The poet never meant to ſay ἵπποι ἔκειντο, but neglectingly left it thus, as truſting, the nature of the thing would inſtruct the reader to ſupply ἵςασαν, or ſome ſuch word expreſſive of the *poſture* required.

Nay, writers of more exactneſs than theſe ſimple Greek poets have occaſionally overlooked ſuch inaccuracies: as Cicero [s], who, when more intent on his *argument*, than *expreſſion*, lets fall this impropriety, *Nec vero* SUPRA TERRAM, *ſed etiam* IN INTIMIS EJUS TENEBRIS *plurimarum rerum* LATET *utilitas*. 'Tis plain, the writer, conceiving *extat*, *patet*, or ſome ſuch word, to be neceſſarily ſuggeſted by the tenor of his ſentence, never troubled

[q] ℣ 437. [r] Iliad, Γ. 327. [s] N. D. ii. 64.

himſelf

himſelf to go back to inſert it. Yet theſe are brought as examples of the *double application of ſingle words*. The truth is, they are examples of *indiligence* in the writers, and, as ſuch, may ſhew us, how eaſily they might fall, for the ſame reaſon, into the impropriety of *double ſenſes*. In thoſe of this claſs then the impropriety, complained of, is the effect of mere *inattention or careleſſneſs*.

2. On the other hand, when this negligent ſimplicity of *thinking and ſpeaking* gives way to the utmoſt poliſh and refinement in *both*, we are then to expect it, for the contrary reaſon. For the more obvious and natural forms of writing being, now, grown common, are held inſipid, and the public taſte demands to be gratified by the ſeaſoning of a more ſtudied and artificial expreſſion. It is not enough to *pleaſe*, the writer muſt find means to *ſtrike* and *ſurprize*. And hence the *antitheſis*, the *remote alluſion*, and every other mode of *affected eloquence*. But of theſe the *firſt* that prevails, is the application of the *double ſenſe*. For the general uſe juſtifying it, it eaſily paſſes, with the reader and writer too, for *natural* expreſſion; and yet as ſplitting the attention, at once, on two different views, carries with it all the novelty and ſurprize, that are wanted. When the public taſte is not, yet, far gone in this refinement, and the writer hath himſelf the trueſt taſte (which was VIRGIL's caſe) ſuch affectations will not be very common; or, when they do occur, will, for the moſt part, be agreeably ſoftened. As in the inſtance of *retroque pedem cum voce repreſſit*; where, by making *voce* immediately dependent on the *prepoſition*, and remotely on the *verb*, he ſoftens the harſhneſs of the expreſſion, which ſeems much more tolerable in this form, than if he had put it, *pedem vocemque repreſſit*. So again in the line,

[*Crudeles aras trajectaque pectora ferro*
Nudavit]

the incongruity of *the two ſenſes* in *nudavit*, is the leſs perceived from its *metaphorical application* to *one* of them.

But the deſire of *pleaſing continually*, which, in the circumſtances ſuppoſed, inſenſibly grows into a *habit*, muſt, of neceſſity, betray writers of leſs taſte and exactneſs into the

the frequent commiſſion of this fault. Which, as Mr. Addiſon takes notice, was remarkably the caſe with OVID.

The purpoſe of all this is to ſhew, that the uſe of this *form of ſpeaking* aroſe from *negligence*, or *affectation*, never from *judgment*. And ſuch being the obvious, and, it is preſumed, true account of the matter, the learned *Animadverter* on CHARITON is left, as I ſaid, to make the beſt of his *authorities*; or, even to enlarge his liſt of them with the *Centuries* [t] of his good friends, at his leiſure. For till he can tell us of a writer, who, neither in his *careleſs*, nor *ambitious* humours, is capable of this folly, his accumulated citations, were they more to his purpoſe, than many of them are, will do him little ſervice. Unleſs perhaps (which, after all, may be his real ſentiment) we are to give up common ſenſe to authority, and pride ourſelves on mimicking the very defects of our *betters*. And even here he need not be at a loſs for *precedents*. For ſo the diſciples of Plato, we are told, in former times, affected to be *round-ſhoulder'd*, in compliment to their maſter; and Ariſtotle's worſhippers, becauſe of a natural impediment in this philoſopher's ſpeech, thought it to their credit to turn *Stammerers*. And without doubt, while this faſhion prevailed, there were critics, who found out a *Je ne ſçai quoi* in the *air* of the one party, and in the *eloquence* of the other.

97. SUSPENDIT PICTA VULTUM MENTEMQUE TABELLA;] Horace judiciouſly deſcribes *painting* by that peculiar circumſtance, which does moſt honour to this fine art. It is, that, in the hands of a maſter, it attaches, not the *eyes* only, but the very *ſoul*, to its repreſentation of the *human affections and manners*. For it is in contemplating *ſubjects* of this kind, that the mind, with a fond and eager attention, *hangs* on the picture. Other *imitations* may *pleaſe*, but this warms and tranſports with *paſſion*. And, becauſe whatever addreſſes itſelf immediately to the *eye*, affects us moſt, hence it is, that painting, ſo employed, becomes more efficacious to expreſs the *manners* and imprint *characters*, than poetry itſelf: or, rather, hath the advantages of the beſt and uſefulleſt ſpecies of poetry, the *dramatic*, when enforced by juſt action on the ſtage.

[t] P. 397.

Quintilian

Quintilian gives it the like preference to *Oratory*. Speaking of the uſe of *action* in an orator, he obſerves, "Is "[geſtus] quantum habeat in oratore, momenti; ſatis "vel ex eo patet, quod pleraque, etiam citra verba, ſigni- "ficat. Quippe non manus ſolum, ſed nutus etiàm de- "clarant noſtram voluntatem, & in mutis pro ſermone "ſunt: & ſalutatio frequenter ſine voce intelligitur atque "afficit, & ex ingreſſu vultuque perſpicitur habitus animo- "rum: & animantium quoque, ſermone carentium, ira, "laetitia, adulatio, & oculis & quibuſdam aliis corporis "ſignis deprehenditur. Nec mirum, ſi iſta, quae tamen "aliquo ſunt poſita motu, tantum in animis valent: quum "*pictura, tacens opus, & habitûs ſemper ejuſdem, ſic intimos* "*penetret affectus, ut ipſam vim dicendi nonnunquam ſu-* "*perare videatur*[v]."

We ſee then of what importance it is, ſince *affections* of every kind are equally within his power, that the painter apply himſelf to excite only *thoſe*, which are ſubſervient to good morals. An importance, of which Ariſtotle himſelf (who was no enthuſiaſt in the fine arts) was ſo ſenſible, that he gives it in charge, amongſt other political inſtructions, to the governors of youth, "that they allow "them to ſee no other pictures, than ſuch as have this "moral aim and tendency; of which kind were more "eſpecially thoſe of POLYGNOTUS." [POLIT. lib. viii. c. 5.]

For the *manner*, in which this moral efficacy of picture is brought about, we find it agreeably explained in that converſation of *Socrates* with *Parrhaſius* in the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon. The whole may be worth conſidering.

"PAINTING, ſaid Socrates, one day, in a converſation "with the painter Parrhaſius, is, I think, the reſemblance "or imitation of ſenſible objects. For you repreſent, in "colours, bodies of all ſorts, *hollow and projecting, bright* "*and obſcure, hard and ſoft, old and new.* We do. And, "when you would draw beautiful pourtraits, ſince it is "not poſſible to find any *ſingle figure* of a man, faultleſs in "all its parts and of exact proportion; your way is to

[v] INST. ORAT. xi. 3.

"collect,

" collect, from *ſeveral*, thoſe members or features, which " are moſt perfect in each, and ſo, by joining them toge- " ther, to compound one whole body, compietely beauti- " ful. " That is our method." What then, continued " Socrates, and are you not able, alſo, to imitate, in co- " lours, the MANNERS; thoſe tendencies and diſpoſitions " of the ſoul, which are benevolent, friendly, and ami- " able; ſuch as inſpire love and affection into the heart, " and whoſe ſoft inſinuations carry with them the power " of perſuaſion.

" How, replied Parrhaſius, can the pencil imitate *that*, " which hath no proportion, colour, or any other of thoſe " properties, you have been juſt now enumerating, as the " objects of ſight? Why, is it not true, returned So- " crates, that a man ſometimes caſts a *kind*, ſometimes, " an *angry*, look on others? " It is." There muſt then be " ſomething in the eyes capable of expreſſing thoſe paſ- " ſions. " There muſt." And is there not a wide dif- " ference between the look of him, who takes part in the " proſperity of a friend, and another, who ſympathizes " with him in his ſorrows? " Undoubtedly, there is " the wideſt. The countenance, in the one caſe, ex- " preſſes joy, in the other, concern." Theſe affections " may then be repreſented in picture. " They may " ſo." In like manner, all other diſpoſitions of our na- " ture, *the lofty and the liberal, the abject and ungenerous,* " *the temperate and the prudent, the petulant and profligate,* " theſe are, ſeverally, diſcernible by the *look or attitude:* " and that, whether we obſerve men in *action*, or at " *reſt*. " They are." And theſe, therefore, come within " the power of graphical imitation? " They do." Which " then, concluded Socrates, do you believe, men take the " greateſt pleaſure in contemplating; ſuch imitations, as " ſet before them the GOOD, the LOVELY, and the FAIR, " or thoſe, which repreſent the BAD, the HATEFUL, and " the UGLY, *qualities and affections of humanity?* " There " can be no doubt, ſaid Parrhaſius, of their giving the " preference to the former." [Lib. iii.]

The concluſion, the *philoſopher* drives at in this con- verſation, and which the *painter* readily concedes to him,

is what, I am perſuaded, every great maſter of the art would be willing to admit and act upon, were he at liberty to purſue the bent of his own natural genius and inclination. But it unfortunately happens, to the infinite hurt and prejudice of this *mode of imitation*, above all others, that the artiſt *deſigns* not ſo much what his own conſcious idea of the dignity of his profeſſion requires of him, or the general taſte of thoſe, he would moſt wiſh for his judges, approves; as what the rich or noble *Connoiſſeur*, who *beſpeaks* his work, and preſcribes the ſubject, demands. What this hath uſually been, let the hiſtory of antient and modern painting declare. Yet, conſidering its vaſt power in MORALS, as explained above, one cannot enough lament the ill deſtiny of this divine ART; which, from the chaſt hand-maid of *virtue*, hath been debauched, in violence to her nature, to a ſhameleſs proſtitute of *vice*, and procureſs of *pleaſure*.

Our inimitable Shakeſpear, who employed his great talents of poetry to other purpoſes, could not obſerve this corruption of a ſiſter *art*, without a becoming indignation: and hath, accordingly, taken occaſion, in one of his pieces, to ſatyrize this abuſe with great force and ſpirit. I ſpeak of the INDUCTION, as he calls it, to *The Taming of the Shrew*; which deſerves, for the excellence of its moral deſign and beauty of execution, throughout, to be ſet in a juſt light.

This *Prologue* ſets before us the picture of a *poor drunken beggar*, advanced, for a ſhort ſeaſon, into the proud rank of *nobility*. And the humour of the ſcene is taken to conſiſt in the ſurprize and aukward deportment of SLY; in this his ſtrange and unwonted ſituation. But the poet had a further deſign and more worthy his genius, than this farcical pleaſantry. He would expoſe, under the cover of this mimic fiction, the truly ridiculous figure of men of rank and quality, when they employ their great advantages of *place and fortune*, to no better purpoſes, than the ſoft and ſelfiſh gratification of their own intemperate paſſions: Of *thoſe*, who take the mighty privilege of *deſcent* and *wealth* to lie in the freer indulgence of thoſe pleaſures, which the beggar

as fully enjoys, and with infinitely more propriety and conſiſtency of character, than their *Lordſhips*.

To give a poignancy to his ſatire, the poet makes a *man of quality* himſelf, juſt returned from the chace, with all his mind intent upon his pleaſures, contrive this metamorphoſis of the beggar, in the way of ſport and deriſion only; not conſidering, how ſeverely the jeſt was going to turn upon himſelf. His firſt reflexions, on ſeeing this brutal drunkard, are excellent.

O! monſtrous beaſt! how like a ſwine he lies!
Grim Death! how foul and loathſome is thy image!

The *offence* is taken at *human nature*, degraded into *beſtiality*; and at a ſtate of ſtupid *inſenſibility*, *the image of death*. Nothing can be juſter, than this repreſentation. For theſe Lordly ſenſualiſts have a very nice and faſtidious abhorrence of ſuch *ignoble* brutality. And what alarms their fears with the proſpect of *death*, cannot chuſe but preſent *a foul and loathſome image*. It is, alſo, ſaid in perfect conſiſtency with the true Epicurean character, as given by theſe, who underſtood it beſt, and which is, here, ſuſtained by this noble diſciple. For, though theſe great maſters of wiſdom made *pleaſure* the *ſupreme good*, yet, they were among the firſt, as we are told, to cry out againſt the ASOTOS; meaning ſuch groſs ſenſualiſts, "qui in men-"ſam vomunt & qui de conviviis auferuntur, crudique ſe "poſtridie ſe rurſus ingurgitant." But as for the "mun-"dos, elegantes, optumis COCIS, PISTORIBUS, PISCATU, "AUCUPIO, VENATIONE, his omnibus exquiſitis, vi-"tantes cruditatem," theſe they complimented with the name of BEATOS and SAPIENTES. [CIC. DE FIN. lib. ii. 8.]

And then, though their philoſophy promiſed an exemption from the terrors of death, yet the boaſted exemption conſiſted only in a trick of keeping it out of the memory by continual diſſipation; ſo that when accident forced it upon them, they could not help on all occaſions, expreſſing the moſt dreadful apprehenſions of it.

However, this tranſient gloom is ſoon ſucceeded by gayer proſpects. My *Lord* bethinks himſelf to raiſe a little diverſion out of this adventure.

Sirs, I will practice on this drunken man.

And, ſo, propoſes to have him *conveyed to bed*, and bleſſed with all thoſe regalements of coſtly luxury, in which a ſelfiſh opulence is wont to find its ſupreme happineſs.

The project is carried into execution. And now the jeſt begins. SLY, awaking from his drunken nap, calls out as uſual for a *cup of ale*. On which the *Lord*, very characteriſtically, and (taking the poet's deſign [x], as here explained) with infinite ſatyr, replies,

O! that a mighty man of ſuch deſcent,
Of ſuch poſſeſſions, and ſo high eſteem,
Should be infuſed with ſo foul a ſpirit!

And, again, afterwards,

Oh! noble Lord, bethink thee of thy birth,
Call home thy antient thoughts from baniſhment,
And baniſh hence theſe lowly, abject themes.

For, what is the recollection of this *high deſcent* and large *poſſeſſions* to do for him? And, for the introduction of what better thoughts and nobler purpoſes, are theſe *lowly abject themes* to be diſcarded? Why, the whole inventory of Patrician pleaſures is called over; and he hath his choice of whichſoever of them ſuits beſt with his Lordſhip's improved palate. A long train of *ſervants, ready at his beck*: muſic, ſuch as *twenty caged nightingales do ſing*: couches, *ſofter and ſweeter than the luſtful bed of Semiramis*: *burning odours, and diſtilled waters*: *floors beſtrewed with carpets*: the diverſions of *hawks, hounds, and horſes*: in ſhort, all the objects of exquiſite indulgence are preſented to him.

But among theſe, one ſpecies of refined enjoyment, which requires a *taſte*, above the coarſe breeding of abject commonalty, is chiefly inſiſted on. We had a hint, of what we were to expect, before,

Carry him gently to my faireſt chamber,
And hang it round with all my wanton pictures. Sc. II.

[x] To apprehend it thoroughly, it may not be amiſs to recollect what the ſenſible BRUYERE obſerves on a like occaſion. "Un GRAND aime le *Champagne*, abhorre la *Brie*; il s'enyvre de meilleure vin, que l'homme du peuple: "*ſeule difference*, que la crapule laiſſe entre les conditions les plus diſproportionnées, entre le SEIGNEUR, & l'ESTAFIER." [Tom. ii. p. 12.]

And

And what Lord, in the luxury of his wiſhes, could feign to himſelf a more delicious collection, than is here delineated?

2. Man. *Do'ſt thou love* PICTURES? *We will fetch thee ſtraight*
ADONIS, *painted by a running brook*;
And CITHEREA *all in ſedges hid*;
Which ſeem to move and wanton with her breath,
Ev'n as the waving ſedges play with wind.
Lord. *We'll ſhew thee* Io, *as ſhe was a maid.*
And how ſhe was beguiled and ſurprized,
As lively painted, as the deed was done.
3. Man. *Or* DAPHNE, *roaming thro' a thorny wood,*
Scratching her legs, that one ſhall ſwear, ſhe bleeds,
So workmanly the blood and tears are drawn.

Theſe pictures, it will be owned, are, all of them, well choſen[y]. But the ſervants were not ſo deep in the ſecret, as their maſter. They dwell entirely on circumſtantials. While his lordſhip, who had, probably, been trained in the *chaſt* ſchool of Titian, is for coming to the point more directly. There is a fine ridicule implied in this.

After theſe incentives of *picture*, the charms of *beauty itſelf* are preſented, as the crowning privilege of his high ſtation.

Thou haſt a Lady far more beautiful
Than any woman in this waining age.

Here indeed the poet plainly forgets himſelf. The *ſtate*, if not the *enjoyment*, of nobility, ſurely demanded a *miſtreſs*, inſtead of a *wife*. All that can be ſaid in excuſe of this indecorum, is, that he perhaps conceived, a ſimple beggar, all unuſed to the refinements of high life, would be too much ſhocked, at ſetting out, with a propoſal, ſo remote from all his former practices. Be it, as it will, *beauty*, even in a

[y] *Sir Epicure Mammon*, indeed, would have thought this an inſipid collection; for he would have *his rooms*

"Fill'd with ſuch pictures, as Tiberius took
"From Elephantis, and dull Aretine
"But coldly imitated." *Alchemiſt*, Act II. Sc. II.

But then *Sir Epicure* was one of the ASOTI, before-mentioned.

wife, had ſuch an effect on this *mock Lord*, that, quite melted and overcome by it, he yields himſelf at laſt to the inchanting deception.

I ſee, I hear, I ſpeak,
I ſmell ſweet ſavours, and I feel ſoft things;
UPON MY LIFE I AM A LORD INDEED.

The ſatyr is ſo ſtrongly marked in this laſt line, that one can no longer doubt of the writer's intention. If any *ſhould*, let me further remind him, that the poet, in this fiction, but makes his Lord play the ſame game, *in jeſt*; as the Sicilian tyrant acted, long ago, very *ſeriouſly*. The two caſes are ſo ſimilar, that ſome readers may, perhaps, ſuſpect the poet of having taken the whole conceit from Tully. His deſcription of this inſtructive ſcenery is given in the following words:

" Viſne (inquit Dionyſius) ô Damocle, quoniam te haec " vita delectat, ipſe eandem deguſtare & fortunam expe- " riri meam? Cum ſe ille cupere dixiſſet, conlocari juſſit " hominem in AUREO LECTO, STRATO PULCHER- " RIMO, TEXTILI STRAGULO MAGNIFICIS OPERIBUS " PICTO: abacoſque complures ornavit ARGENTO AU- " ROQUE CAELATO: hinc ad menſam EXIMIA FORMA " PUEROS delectos juſſit conſiſtere, eoſque NUTUM " ILLIUS intuentes diligenter miniſtrare: aderant UN- " GUENTA, CORONAE: INCÆNDEBANTUR ODORES: " MENSAE CONQUISITISSIMIS EPULIS EXTRUEBAN- " TUR." [Tuſc. Diſp. lib. v. 21.]

It follows, that *Damocles* fell into the ſweet deluſion of *Criſtophero Sly*.

FORTUNATUS SIBI DAMOCLES VIDEBATUR.

The event, in theſe two dramas, was, indeed, different. For the philoſopher took care to make the *flatterer* ſenſible of his miſtake; while the poet did not think fit to diſabuſe the *beggar*. But this was according to the deſign of each. For, the *former* would ſhew the *miſery* of *regal luxury*; the *latter*, its *vanity*. The *tyrant*, therefore, is painted *wretched*. And his *Lordſhip* only a *beggar in diſguiſe*.

To conclude with our poet. The ſtrong ridicule and decorum of this *Induction* make it appear, how impoſſible it

it was for Shakeſpear, in his idleſt hours, perhaps, when he was only reviſing the traſh of others, not to leave ſome ſtrokes of the *maſter* behind him. But the morality of its purpoſe ſhould chiefly recommend it to us. For the whole was written with the beſt deſign of expoſing that monſtrous Epicurean poſition, *that the true enjoyment of life conſiſts in a delirium of ſenſual pleaſure.* And this, in a way the moſt likely to work upon the *great*, by ſhewing their pride, that it was fit only to conſtitute the *ſummum bonum* of one

No better than a poor and loathſome Beggar. Sc. III.

Nor let the poet be thought to have dealt too freely with his *betters*, in giving this repreſentation of *nobility*. He had the higheſt authority for what he did. For the great *maſter of life* himſelf gave no other of *Divinity*.

Ipſe pater veri Doctus Epicurus in arte
Juſſit & HANC VITAM DIXIT HABERE DEOS.
[PETRON. c. 132.]

118. HIC ERROR TAMEN &c.] What follows from hence to ℣ 139, containing an encomium on *the office of poets*, is one of the leading beauties in the epiſtle. Its artifice conſiſts in this, that, under the cover of a negligent commendation, interſperſed with even ſome *traits* of pleaſantry upon them, it inſinuates to the emperor, in the manner the leaſt offenſive and oſtentatious, the genuin merits, and even *ſacredneſs* of their character. The whole is a fine inſtance of that addreſs, which, in delivering rules for this kind of writing, the poet preſcribes elſewhere.

Et ſermone opus eſt modo triſti, ſaepe jocoſo,
Defendente vicem modo Rhetoris atque Poetae;
Interdum URBANI PARCENTIS VIRIBUS, ATQUE
EXTENUANTIS EAS CONSULTO. [1 S. x. 14.]

This conduct, in the place before us, ſhews the poet's exquiſite knowledge of *human nature*. For there is no ſurer method of removing prejudices, and gaining over *others* to an eſteem of any thing we would recommend, than by not appearing to lay too great a ſtreſs on it *ourſelves*. It is, further, a proof of his intimate acquaintance with the pe-

culiar turn of the *great*; who, not being forward to think highly of any thing but themſelves and their own dignities, are, with difficulty, brought to conceive of other accompliſhments, as of much value; and can only be won by the fair and candid addreſs of their apologiſt, who muſt be ſure not to carry his praiſes and pretenſions too high. It is this art of entering into the *characters*, *prejudices*, *and expectations* of others, and of knowing to ſuit our application, prudently, but with innocence, to them, which conſtitutes what we call A KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD. An art, of which the great poet was a conſummate maſter, and than which there cannot be a more uſeful or amiable quality. Only we muſt take care not to confound it with that ſupple, verſatile, and intriguing genius, which, taking all ſhapes, and reflecting all characters generally paſſes for it in the commerce of the world, or rather is prized much above it; but, as requiring no other talents in the poſſeſſor than thoſe of a *low cunning* and *corrupt deſign*, is of all others the moſt miſchievous, worthleſs, and contemptible character, that infeſts human life.

118. HIC ERROR TAMEN ET LEVIS HAEC INSANIA QUANTAS VIRTUTES HABEAT, SIC COLLIGE:] This apology for *poets*, and, in them, for *poetry* itſelf, though delivered with much apparent negligence and unconcern, yet, if conſidered, will be found to comprize in it every thing, that any, or all, of its moſt zealous advocates have ever pretended in its behalf. For it comprehends,

I. [From ỳ 118 to 124.] THE PERSONAL GOOD QUALITIES OF THE POET. Nothing is more inſiſted on by thoſe, who take upon themſelves the patronage and recommendation of any *art*, than that it tends to raiſe in the profeſſor of it all thoſe *virtues*, which contribute moſt to his *own* proper enjoyment, and render him moſt agreeable to *others*. Now this, it ſeems, may be urged, on the ſide of *poetry*, with a peculiar force. For not only the *ſtudy* of this art hath a *direct* tendency to produce a neglect or diſregard of *worldly honours and emoluments* (from the too eager appetite of which almoſt all the *calamities*, as well as the more unfriendly *vices*, of men ariſe) but he, whom

whom the benign aſpect of the muſe hath glanced upon and deſtined for her peculiar ſervice, is, by *conſtitution*, which is ever the beſt ſecurity, fortified againſt the attacks of them. Thus, his RAPTURES in the enjoyment of his muſe make him overlook *the common accidents of life:* [ẏ 121] *he is generous, open, and undeſigning,* by NATURE: [ẏ 122] to which we muſt not forget to add, that he is *temperate*, that is to ſay, *poor*, by PROFESSION.

VIVIT SILIQUIS ET PANE SECUNDO.

II. [From ẏ 124 to 132] THE UTILITY OF THE POET TO THE STATE: and this both on a *civil* and *moral* account. For, 1. the poets, whom we read in our younger years, and from whom we learn the *powers of words, and hidden harmony of numbers*, that is, as a profound Scotchman teaches, the *firſt and moſt eſſential principles* of eloquence [z], enable, by degrees, and inſtruct their pupil to appear, with advantage, in that extenſively uſeful capacity of a public ſpeaker. And, indeed, graver writers, than our poet, have ſent the orator to this ſchool. But the pretenſions of poetry go much farther. It delights [from ẏ 130 to 132] to immortalize the triumphs of virtue: to *record* or *feign* illuſtrious examples of heroic worth, for the ſervice of the *riſing age:* and, which is the laſt and beſt fruit of philoſophy itſelf, it can relieve even the languor of *ill-health* and ſuſtain *poverty* herſelf under the ſcorn and inſult of contumelious opulence. 2. In a *moral* view its ſervices are not leſs conſiderable. (For it may be obſerved the *poet* was ſo far of a mind with the *philoſopher* to give no quarter to *immoral* poets.) And to this end it ſerves, 1. [ẏ 127] *in turning the ear of youth* from that early corruptor of its innocence, the ſeducement of a *looſe and impure communication.* 2. Next [ẏ 120] in forming our riper age (which it does with all the addreſs and tenderneſs of *friendſhip:* AMICIS *praeceptis*) *by the ſanctity and wiſdom of its precepts.* And, 3. which is the proper office of *tragedy*, in *correcting the exceſſes of the natural paſſions* [ẏ 129.] The reader, who doth not turn himſelf to the original, will be apt to miſtake this detail of the virtues of poetry, for an ac-

[z] See an eſſay on *the Compoſition of the Antients*, by J. GRANGE, Eſq.

count

count of the *republics*, of antient and modern times; whoſe proudeſt boaſt, when the philanthropy of their enthuſiaſtic projectors ran at the higheſt, was but to *prevent the impreſſions of vice:* to *form the mind to habits of virtue:* and *to curb and regulate the paſſions.*

III. His services to Religion. This might well enough be ſaid, whether by *religion* we underſtand an *internal reverence* of the Gods, which poetry firſt and principally intended; or their *popular adoration and worſhip*, which, by its *fictions*, as of neceſſity conforming to the received fancies of ſuperſtition, it muſt greatly tend to promote and eſtabliſh. But the poet, artfully ſeizing a circumſtance, which ſuppoſes and includes in it both theſe reſpects, renders his defence vaſtly intereſting.

All the cuſtomary *addreſſes* of Heatheniſm to its gods, more eſpecially, on any great and ſolemn emergency, were the work of the poet. For *nature*, it ſeems, had taught the pagan world, what the Hebrew Prophets themſelves did not diſdain to practice, that, to lift the imagination, and, with it, the ſluggiſh affections of human nature, to Heaven, it was expedient to lay hold on every aſſiſtance of art. They therefore preſented their ſupplications to the Divinity in the richeſt and brighteſt dreſs of eloquence, which is poetry. Not to inſiſt, that *devotion*, when ſincere and ardent, from its very *nature*, enkindles a glow of thought, which communicates ſtrongly with the tranſports of poetry. Hence *the language of the gods* (for ſo was poetry accounted, as well from its being the divineſt ſpecies of communication, our rude conceptions can well frame even for ſuperior intelligencies, as for that it was the fitteſt vehicle of our applications to them) became not the ornament only, but an *eſſential* in the ceremonial, of paganiſm. And this, together with an alluſion to *a form of public prayer* (for ſuch was his *ſecular ode*) compoſed by himſelf, gives, at once, a grace and ſublimity to this part of the apology, which are perfectly inimitable.

Thus hath the great poet, in the compaſs of a few lines, drawn together a complete defence of his *art*. For what more could the warmeſt admirer of poetry, or, becauſe zeal is quickened by oppoſition, what more could the vehement

ment declaimer againſt Plato, urge in its behalf, than that it furniſhes, to the poet himſelf, the ſureſt means of *ſolitary and ſocial* enjoyment: and further ſerves to the moſt important CIVIL, MORAL, and RELIGIOUS purpoſes?

121. INCENDIA RIDET:] The ſtoical race, whom the poet compliments in theſe words, have not only, on occaſion, ſhewn themſelves ſuperior to the common accident of *loſing their houſes by fire* (which, conſidering the *quality* of ſuch as theſe philoſophers uſually inhabit, may paſs for no great matter) but their inſenſibility has ſometimes gone ſo far as to neglect their *own tenements of clay*, which muſt needs be thought much more to the commendation of their virtue. The ſtory is of the famous Italian poet, MARINI; who, as the writer of his life aſſures us, ſuffered one of his legs to burn, for a conſiderable time, without being diverted by this accident from the buſineſs, he was then upon, of *reviſing ſome ſtanzas of his* ADONIS. [ELOGES DES SÇAV. tom. ii. p. 380.]

132. CASTIS CUM PUERIS, &c.] We have, before, taken notice, how properly the poet, for the eaſier and more ſucceſsful introduction of his apology, aſſumed the perſon *urbani, parcentis viribus*. We ſee him, here, in *that* of *Rhetoris atque Poetae*. For admoniſhed, as it were, by the riſing dignity of his ſubject, which led him from the *moral*, to ſpeak of the *religious*, uſes of poetry, he inſenſibly drops the *badineur* and takes an air, not of ſerioufneſs only, but of ſolemnity. This change is made with *art*. For the attention is carried from the uſes of poetry in *conſoling the unhappy*, by the eaſieſt tranſition imaginable, to the ſtill more ſolemn application of it to the *offices of piety*. And its *uſe*, is, to impreſs on the mind a ſtronger ſenſe of the weight of the poet's plea, than could have been expected from a more direct and continued declamation. For this is the conſtant and natural effect of knowing to paſs from *gay* to *ſevere*, with grace and dignity.

169. SED HABET COMOEDIA TANTO PLUS ONERIS, QUANTO VENIAE MINUS.] The poetry of the ſtage, agreeably

agreeably to the common diviſion, is either TRAGEDY, COMEDY, or FARCE. But the diſtinct provinces of theſe *three ſpecies* ſeem but very imperfectly ſettled or underſtood.

The immediate purpoſe of the drama is, univerſally, *to repreſent human life in the way of action.* But this repreſentation is, further, made by *different means*, and for *ſeparate and diſtinct ends.*

The proper *end* of Tragedy is, by the *Pathos*, to excite the paſſions of *pity* and *terror*, and perhaps ſome others, nearly allied to them.

Comedy hath other views. It delineates human life, but for the purpoſe of producing, by *humour*, "that ſen- "ſation of *pleaſure*, which ariſes from a view of the *truth* "of repreſentation of *characters*; more eſpecially their "*ſpecific differences.*" If we attend to the *effect* which the moſt and the beſt of thoſe dramas, we call *comic*, have upon us, it can be no doubt, that they propoſe ſuch pleaſure for their main *end.*

Farce is "that ſpecies of dramatic repreſentation, whoſe "ſole aim and tendency is, by what we call *Burleſque*, to "excite laughter."

The idea of theſe *three ſpecies* being thus propoſed, let us now ſee, what concluſions may be drawn from it. And chiefly in reſpect of *tragedy* and *comedy*, which are moſt important. For what concerns the province of *farce*, this will be eaſily underſtood, when the character of the other two is once ſettled.

[I.] 1. If the proper end of TRAGEDY be to *affect*, it follows, "that *actions*, not characters, are the chief ob- "ject of its repreſentations." For that which *affects* us moſt in the view of human life is the obſervation of thoſe ſignal circumſtances of *felicity or diſtreſs*, which occur in the fortunes of men. But *felicity* and *diſtreſs*, as the great critic takes notice, depend on *action*; ἐν τοῖς πράξεις εὐδαίμονες, ἢ τναντίον. They are then the calamitous *events*, or fortunate *ſucceſſes* in human action, which ſtir up the ſtronger *affections*, and agitate the heart with *paſſion.* The *manners* are not, indeed, to be neglected. But they become an inferior conſideration in the views

of

of the tragic poet, and are exhibited only for the ſake of making the *action* more proper to intereſt us. Thus our *joy*, on the *happy cataſtrophe* of the fable, depends, in a good degree, on the *virtuous character* of the agent; as, on the other hand, we ſympathize more ſtrongly with him, on a *diſtreſsful iſſue*. The *manners* of the ſeveral perſons in the drama muſt, alſo, be ſignified, in order to bring about the incidents of the ſtory with *truth and probability*. Hence every thing paſſing before us, as we are accuſtomed to ſee it in real life, we enter more warmly into their intereſts, as forgetting, that we are attentive to a *fictitious ſcene*. And, beſides, from knowing the perſonal *good, or ill, qualities* of the agents, we learn to anticipate their future *felicity* or *miſery*, which gives increaſe to the *paſſion* in either caſe. Our acquaintance with IAGO's *cloſe villainy* makes us tremble for Othello and Deſdemona beforehand: and HAMLET's *filial piety and intrepid daring* occaſion the audience ſecretly to exult in the *expectation* of ſome ſucceſsful vengeance to be inflicted on the inceſtuous murderers.

2. For the ſame reaſon as tragedy takes for its *object* the actions of men, it, alſo, prefers, or rather confines itſelf to, ſuch actions, as are moſt *important*. Which is only ſaying, that as it intends to *intereſt* us, it, of courſe, chuſes the repreſentation of thoſe *events*, which are moſt *intereſting*.

3. On the ſame account, the *perſons*, whoſe actions it would exhibit to us, muſt be of *principal rank and dignity*. For the actions of *theſe* are both in *themſelves*, and in their *conſequences*, moſt fitted to excite paſſion. The *diſtreſſes* of private and inferior perſonages will, no doubt, *affect* us greatly; and we may give the name of *tragedies*, if we pleaſe, to dramatic repreſentations of them: as, in fact, we have ſeveral applauded pieces of this kind. Nay, it may ſeem, that the fortunes of private men, as more nearly reſembling *thoſe* of the generality, ſhould be moſt *affecting*. But this circumſtance, in no degree, makes amends for the loſs of other and much greater *advantages*. For, whatever be the *unhappy incidents* in the ſtory of private men, it is certain, they muſt take faſter hold of the *imagination*,

and

and, of courſe, impreſs the heart more forcibly, when related of the higher characters in life. Kings, Heroes, Stateſmen, and other perſons of great and public authority influence by their *ill-fortune* the whole community, to which they belong. The attention is rouzed, and all our faculties take an alarm, at the apprehenſion of ſuch extenſive and important wretchedneſs. And, beſides, if we regard the *event* itſelf, without an eye to its *effects*, there is ſtill the wideſt difference between the two caſes. Thoſe ideas of awe and veneration, which opinion throws round the perſons of princes, make us eſteem the very *ſame event* in their fortunes, as more auguſt and emphatical, than in the fortunes of private men. In the *one*, it is ordinary and familiar to our conceptions, it is ſingular and ſurprizing, in the *other*. The fall of a *cottage*, by the accidents of time and weather, is almoſt unheeded; while the ruin of a *tower*, which the neighbourhood hath gazed at, for ages, with admiration, ſtrikes all obſervers with concern. On the whole it appears, that as the proper object of tragedy is *action*, ſo it is *important* action, and therefore more eſpecially the action of *great and illuſtrious men*. Each of theſe concluſions is the direct conſequence of our idea of its *end*.

The reverſe of all this holds true of COMEDY. For,

1. Comedy, by the very terms of the definition, is converſant about *characters*. And if we obſerve, that which creates the pleaſure we find in contemplating the lives of men, conſidered as diſtinct from the *intereſt* we take in their fortunes, is the contemplation of their manners and humours. Their *actions*, when they are not of that ſort, which ſeizes our admiration, or catches the affections, are no otherwiſe conſidered by us, than as they are ſenſible indications of the internal ſentiment and diſpoſition. Our intimate conſciouſneſs of the ſeveral turns and windings of our nature, makes us attend to theſe pictures of human life with an incredible curioſity. And herein the proper entertainment, which comic repreſentation, *as ſuch*, adminiſters to the mind, conſiſts. By turning the thought on *event and action*, this entertainment is proportionably leſſened;

leſſened; that is, the *end* of comedy is leſs perfectly attained [a].

But here, again, though *action* be not the main object of comedy, yet it is not to be neglected, any more than *character* in tragedy, but comes in as an uſeful acceſſary, or aſſiſtant to it. For the *manners of men* only ſhew themſelves, or ſhew themſelves moſt uſually, in *action*. It is this, which fetches out the latent ſtrokes of *character*, and renders the inward *temper and diſpoſition* the object of ſenſe. *Probable circumſtances* are then imagined, and a certain *train of action* contrived, to evidence the *internal qualities*. There is no *other*, or no *probable* way, but this, of making us acquainted with them. Again; by engaging his *characters* in a courſe of action and the purſuit of ſome *end*, the comic poet leaves them to expreſs themſelves undiſguiſedly, and *without deſign*, which adds much to the opinion of the *truth* of repreſentation.

Add to this, that when the *imagined end* is juſt important enough to catch the attention, without engroſſing it, we fall inſenſibly into the illuſion of our being preſent to a courſe of *living action*, which perfectly realizes the *intended character*, while it leaves us calm and diſengaged enough to turn our principal regard towards it.

Theſe obſervations concerning the *moderated* uſe of action in comedy, inſtruct us what to think "of thoſe "intricate Spaniſh plots, which have been in uſe, and "have *taken* both with us and ſome French writers for the "ſtage. The truth is, they have hindered very much the "main end of comedy. For when theſe unnatural plots "are uſed, the mind is not only entirely *drawn off* from "the characters by thoſe ſurprizing turns and revolutions; "but characters have no opportunity even of being *called*

[a] Ariſtotle was of the ſame mind, as appears from his definition of comedy, which, ſays he, is ΜΙΜΗΣΙΣ ΦΑΥΛΟΤΕΡΩΝ; [κ. ε.] that is, *the imitation of characters*, whatever be the diſtinct meaning of the term φαυλότεροι. It is true, this critic, in his account of the origin of tragedy and comedy, makes them *both* the imitations of ACTIONS. Οἱ μὲν σεμνότεροι ΤΑΣ ΚΑΛΑΣ ἐμιμοῦντο ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ: οἱ δ' ἐυτελέστεροι ΤΑΣ τῶν φαύλων. [κ. δ.] Yet, even here, the expreſſion is ſo put, as if he had been conſcious, that *perſons*, not *actions*, were the direct object of comedy. And the quotation, now alledged from another place, where a definition is given more in form, ſhews, that this was, in effect, his ſentiment.

out

" *out* and diſplaying themſelves. For the actors, of all " characters, *ſucceed* and are *embaraſſed* alike, when the " inſtruments for carrying on deſigns are only *perplexed* " *apartments*, *dark entries*, *diſguiſed habits*, and *ladders of* " *ropes*. The comic plot is and muſt, indeed, be carried " on by *deceipt*. The Spaniſh ſcene does it by deceiving " the man *through his ſenſes:* Terence and Moliere, by " deceiving him *through his paſſions and affections*. This is " the right method: for the character is *not* called out " under the *firſt* ſpecies of deceipt: under the *ſecond*, the " character does *all*."

2. As *character*, not *action*, is the object of comedy; ſo the *characters* it paints muſt not be of *ſingular and illuſtrious note*, either for their *virtues* or *vices*. The reaſon is, that ſuch characters take the *affections*, and ſo call off the mind from adverting to the *truth* of the manners; that is, from receiving the *pleaſure*, which this poem *intends*. Our *ſenſe of imitation* is that to which the comic poet addreſſes himſelf; but ſuch pictures of *eminent worth*, or *villainy* ſeize upon the *moral ſenſe*; and by raiſing the ſtrong correſpondent paſſions of *admiration* and *abhorrence*, turn us aſide from contemplating the *imitation itſelf*. And,

3. For a like cauſe, comedy confines its views to the characters of *private and inferior perſons*. For the *truth of character*, which is the ſpring of *humour*, being neceſſarily, as was obſerved, to be ſhewn through the medium of *action*, and the actions of the great being uſually ſuch as excite the *pathos*, it follows of courſe, that theſe cannot, with propriety, be made the actors in comedy. Perſons of high and public life, if they are drawn in probable agreement to our accuſtomed ideas of them, muſt be employed in ſuch a *courſe of action*, as arreſts the attention, or intereſts the paſſions; and either way it diverts the mind from obſerving the *truth* of manners, that is, it prevents the attainment of the ſpecific *end*, which comedy deſigns.

And if the reaſon, here given, be ſufficient to exclude the *higher characters* in life from this *drama*, even where the repreſentation is intended to be *ſerious*, we ſhall find it ſtill more improper to exhibit them in any pleaſant or ridiculous light. "Tis true, the follies and foibles of the great will

will apparently take an eaſier ridicule by repreſentation, than thoſe of their inferiors. And this it was, which miſled the celebrated P. CORNEILLE into the opinion, *that the actions of the great, and even of kings themſelves, provided they be of the ridiculous kind, are as fit objects of comedy, as any other.* But he did not reflect, that the *actions* of the great being uſually *ſuch*, as intereſt the intire community, at leaſt ſcarcely any other falling beneath vulgar notice; and the higher *characters* being rarely ſeen or contemplated by the people but with reverence, hence it is, that, in fact, *the repreſentation of high life* cannot, without offence to probability, be made *ridiculous*, or conſequently be admitted into comedy under this view. And therefore PLAUTUS, when he thought fit to introduce theſe *reverend perſonages* on the comic ſtage in his AMPHITRUO, though he employed them in no very ſerious matters, was yet obliged to apologize for this impropriety in calling his play a *Tragicomedy*. What he ſays upon the occaſion, though delivered with an air of pleaſantry, is according to the laws of juſt criticiſm.

Faciam ut commiſta ſit TRAGICOCOMOEDIA.
Nam me perpetuo facere, ut ſit Comoedia
REGES QUO VENIANT ET DII, *non par arbitror.*
Quid igitur? Quoniam hic SERVOS QUOQUE PARTES HABET, —
Faciam ſit, proinde ut dixi, TRAGICOCOMOEDIA.
PROL. IN AMPHIT.

And now, taking the *idea* of the *two dramas*, as here opened, along with us, we ſhall be able to give an account of ſeveral *characters*, or attributes, *common* to both, or which ſeverally belong to *each* of them. And,

1. *A plot will be required in both.* For the end of tragedy being to excite the affections *by* action, and the end of comedy to manifeſt the truth of character *through* it, an artful *conſtitution of the fable* is required to do juſtice both to the one and the other. It ſerves to bring out the *pathos*, and to produce *humour*. And thus the general form or ſtructure of the two dramas will be one and the ſame.

2. More particularly, *an unity and even ſimplicity in the conduct of the fable* [b] *is a perfection in each.* For the courſe of the *affections* is diverted, and weakened by the intervention of what we call a *double plot*; and even by a multiplicity of *ſubordinate events*, though tending to a common *end*; and, of *perſons*, though all of them, ſome way, concerned in promoting it. The like conſideration ſhews the obſervance of this *rule* to be eſſential to juſt comedy. For when the *attention* is ſplit on ſo many interfering objects, we are not at leiſure to obſerve, nor do we ſo fully enter into, the *truth of repreſentation* in any of them; the *ſenſe* of *humour*, as of the *pathos*, depending very much on the continued and undiverted operation of its *object* upon us.

3. The two dramas agree, alſo, in this circumſtance; that the *manners* of the perſons exhibited ſhould be *imperfect*. An abſolutely *good*, or an abſolutely *bad*, character is foreign to the purpoſe of *each*. And the reaſon is, 1. That ſuch a repreſentation is *improbable*. Ad *probability* conſtitutes, as we have ſeen, the very eſſence of comedy; and is the *medium*, through which tragedy is enabled moſt powerfully to affect us. 2. Such *characters* are improper to *comedy*, becauſe, as was hinted above, they turn the attention aſide from contemplating the *expreſſion* of them, which we call *humour*. And they are not leſs unſuited to *tragedy*, becauſe, though they make a forcible impreſſion on the mind, yet, as Ariſtotle well obſerves, they do not produce the paſſions of *pity and terror*; that is, their *impreſſions* are not of the nature of that *pathos*, which tragedy propoſes for its *end*. [x. 17.]

There are, likewiſe, ſome peculiarities, which *diſtinguiſh* the two dramas. And,

[b] The neglect of this is one of the greateſt defects in the *modern drama*; which in nothing falls ſo much ſhort of the perfection of the Greek ſcene as in this want of ſimplicity in the conſtruction of its fable. The good ſenſe of the author of the *Hiſtory of the Italian Theatre* (who, though a mere player, appears to have had juſter notions of the drama, than the generality of even profeſſed critics) was ſenſibly ſtruck with this difference in *tragedy*. "Quant à "l'unité d'action, ſays he, je trouve une grande difference entre les tragedies "Grecques & les tragedies Françoiſes; j'apperçois toûjours aiſement l'action "des tragedies Grecques, & je ne la perds point de vûe; mais dans les tragedies "Françoiſes, j'avoüe, que j'ai ſouvent bien de la peine à demêler l'action "des epiſodes, dont elle eſt chargée." [*Hiſt. du Theatre Italien, par* Louis Riccoboni, p. 293. *Paris* 1728.

1. *Though*

1. *Though a plot be neceſſary to produce* humour, *as well as the pathos, yet a* good plot *is not ſo eſſential to comedy, as tragedy.* For the pathos is the reſult of the *entire action*, that is, of all the circumſtances of the ſtory taken together, and conſpiring, by a probable tendency, to a completion in the *event*. A failure in the juſt arrangement and diſpoſition of the parts may, then, affect what is of the eſſence of this drama. On the contrary, *humour*, though brought out by *action*, is not the effect of the *whole*, but may be diſtinctly evidenced in a *ſingle ſcene*; as may be eminently illuſtrated in the two comedies of Fletcher, called *The Little French Lawyer*, and *The Spaniſh Curate*. The nice contexture of the fable therefore, though it may give a *pleaſure* of another kind, is not ſo immediately required to the production of *that* pleaſure, which the nature of comedy demands.

2. *Tragedy ſucceeds beſt, when the ſubject is* real; *comedy, when it is* feigned. What would this ſay, but that tragedy, turning our attention principally on the *action repreſented*, finds means to *intereſt* us more ſtrongly on the perſuaſion of its being taken from *actual life?* While comedy, on the other hand, can neglect theſe ſcrupulous meaſures of *probability*, as intent only on exhibiting *characters*; for which purpoſe an *invented ſtory* will ſerve much better. The reaſon is, *real action* doth not ordinarily afford variety of incidents enough to ſhew the *character* fully: *feigned action* may. To illuſtrate this further, we may obſerve, that comedy makes all its characters *general*; tragedy, *particular*. The *avare* of Moliere is not ſo properly the picture of a *covetous man*, as of *covetouſneſs itſelf*. Racine's *Nero*, on the conttrary, is not a picture of *cruelty*, but of a *cruel man*.

3. A ſameneſs *of character is not uſually objected to in tragedy: in comedy, it would not be endured.* The paſſion of *avarice*, to reſume the inſtance juſt given, being the main object, we find nothing but a diſguſtful repetition in a ſecond attempt to delineate that *character*. A *particular cruel man* only engroſſing our regard in *Nero*, when the train of events evidencing ſuch cruelty is changed, we have all the novelty we look for, and can contemplate, with

pleaſure, the very *ſame* character, ſet forth by a different courſe of action, or diſplayed in ſome other *perſon*.

Other *characters* of the two dramas, as well *peculiar*, as *common*, which might be accounted for from the juſt notion of them, delivered above, I leave to the obſervation of the reader. For my intention is not to write a complete treatiſe on the drama, but briefly to lay down ſuch principles, from whence its *laws* may be derived.

[II.] But it may not be amiſs to expreſs myſelf a little more fully as to the *genius* of comedy; which for want of paſſing through the hands of ſuch a critic, as Ariſtotle, has been leſs perfectly underſtood.

Its *end* is the production of *humour:* or, which comes to the ſame thing, "of that *pleaſure*, which the *truth* of "repreſentation affords, in the *exhibition* of the *private* "*characters* of life, more particularly their *ſpecific dif-* "*ferences*." I add this *latter* clauſe, becauſe the principal pleaſure we take in contemplating characters conſiſts in noting thoſe *differences*. The general attributes of humanity, if repreſented ever ſo truly, give us but a ſlender entertainment. They, of courſe, make a part of the drama; but we chiefly delight in a picture of thoſe peculiar *traits*, which diſtinguiſh the ſpecies. Now theſe diſcriminating marks in the characters of men are not *neceſſarily* the cauſes of ridicule, or pleaſantry of any kind; but *accidentally*, and according to the nature or quality of them. The vanity, and impertinent boaſting of *Thraſo* is the natural object of *contempt*, and, when truly and forcibly expreſſed in his own character, provokes *ridicule*. The eaſy humanity of *Mitio*, which is the leading part of his character, is the object of *approbation*; and, when ſhewn in his own conduct, excites a *pleaſure*, in common with all juſt *expreſſion of the manners*, but of a *ſerious* nature, as being joined with the ſentiment of *eſteem*.

But now as moſt men find a greater pleaſure in gratifying the paſſion of *contempt*, than the calm inſtinct of *approbation*, and ſince perhaps the conſtitution of human life is ſuch, as affords more exerciſe for the one, than the other, hence it hath come to paſs, that the comic poet, who paints for the generality, and follows nature, chuſes more commonly

commonly to ſelect and deſcribe thoſe *peculiarities* in the human character, which, by their nature, excite *pleaſantry*, than ſuch as create a ſerious regard and eſteem. Hence ſome perſons have appropriated the name of *comedies* to thoſe dramas, which chiefly aim at producing *humour*, in the more *proper* ſenſe of the word; under which view it means "ſuch an expreſſion or picture of what is odd, "or inordinate in each character, as gives us the fulleſt "and ſtrongeſt image of the original, and, by the truth of "the repreſentation, expoſes the *ridicule* of it." And it is certain, that comedy receives great advantage from repreſentations of this kind. Nay, it cannot well ſubſiſt without them. Yet it doth not exclude the other and more *ſerious* entertainment, which, as it ſtands on the ſame foundation of *truth of repreſentation*, I venture to include under the *common term*.

Further, there are *two ways* of evidencing the characteriſtic and predominant qualities of men, or, of producing *humour*, which require to be obſerved. The *one* is, when they are ſhewn in the perpetual courſe and tenor of the repreſentation; that is, when the *humour* reſults from the *general* conduct of the perſon in the drama, and the diſcourſe, which he holds in it. The *other* is, when, by an happy and lively ſtroke, the characteriſtic quality is laid open and expoſed *at once*.

The *firſt* ſort of *humour* is that which we find in the antients, and eſpecially Terence. The *latter* is almoſt peculiar to the moderns; who, in uniting theſe two ſpecies of *humour*, have brought a vaſt improvement to the comic ſcene. The reaſon of this difference may perhaps have been the ſingular ſimplicity of the old writers, who were contented to take up with ſuch ſentiments or circumſtances, as moſt naturally and readily occurred in the courſe of the drama: whereas the moderns have been ambitious to ſhew a more exquiſite and ſtudied inveſtigation into the workings of human nature, and have ſought out for thoſe peculiarly ſtriking lineaments, in which the eſſence of character conſiſts. On the ſame account, I ſuppoſe, it was, that the antients had *fewer* characters in their plays, than the moderns, and thoſe more *general*; that is, their dra-

matic writers were well ſatisfied with picturing the moſt *uſual* perſonages, and in their moſt *obvious* lights. They did not, as the moderns (who, if they would aſpire to the praiſe of *novelty*, were obliged to this route) caſt about for leſs *familiar* characters; and the nicer and *leſs obſerved* peculiarities which diſtinguiſh *each*. Be it as it will, the obſervation is certain. Later dramatiſts have apparently ſhewn a more accurate knowledge of human life; and, by opening theſe new and untryed veins of *humour*, have exceedingly enriched the comedy of our times.

But, though we are not to look for the *two ſpecies of humour*, before mentioned, in the ſame perfection on the ſimpler ſtages of *Greece and Rome*, as in *our* improved Theatres, yet the *firſt* of them was clearly ſeen and ſucceſsfully practiſed by the antient comic maſters; and there are not wanting in them ſome few examples even of the *laſt*. "The old man in the *Mother-in-Law* ſays to his Son,

Tum tu igitur nihil adtuliſti huc plus unâ ſententiâ.

"This, as an excellent perſon obſerved to me, is true *hu-*
"*mour*. For his character, which was that of a lover of
"money, drew the obſervation naturally and forcibly from
"him. His diſappointment of a rich ſucceſſion made him
"ſpeak contemptibly of a moral leſſon, which rich and
"covetous men, in their beſt humours, have no high re-
"verence for. And this too without *deſign*; which is
"important, and ſhews the diſtinction of what, in the
"more reſtrained ſenſe of the word, we call *humour*, from
"other modes of *pleaſantry*. For had a young friend of
"the ſon, an unconcerned ſpectator of the ſcene made
"the obſervation, it had then, in another's mouth, been
"*wit*, or a deſigned *banter* on the father's diſappointment.
"As, on the other hand, when ſuch characteriſtic qualities
"are exaggerated, and the expreſſion of them ſtretched
"beyond *truth*, they become *buffoonry*, even in the per-
"ſon's *own*."

This is an inſtance of the *ſecond ſpecies* of humour, under its idea of exciting *ridicule*. But it may, alſo, be employed with the utmoſt *ſerioufneſs*; as being only a method of expreſſing the *truth* of character in the *moſt ſtriking*

ing manner. This ſame *old man* in the Hecyra will furniſh an example. Though a lover of money, he appears, in the main, of an honeſt and worthy nature, and to have born the trueſt affection to an amiable and favourite ſon. In the perplexity of the ſcene, which had ariſen from the ſuppoſed miſunderſtanding between his *ſon's* wife and his *own*, he propoſes, as an expedient to end all differences, to retire with his wife into the country. And to enforce this propoſal to the young man, who had his reaſons for being againſt it, he adds,

odioſa haec eſt aetas adoleſcentulis :
E medio aequum excedere eſt ; poſtremo nos jam fabula
Sumus, Pamphile, ſenex atque anus.

There is nothing, I ſuppoſe, in theſe words, which provokes a ſmile. Yet the *humour* is ſtrong, as before. In his ſollicitude to promote his ſon's ſatisfaction, he lets fall a ſentiment truly characteriſtic, and which old men uſually take great pains to conceal ; I mean, his acknowledgment of *that ſuſpicious fear of contempt, which is natural to old age.* So true a picture of life in the repreſentation of this *weakneſs*, might, in other circumſtances, have created ſome *pleaſantry* ; but the *occaſion*, which forced it from him, diſcovering, at the ſame time, the *amiable diſpoſition* of the ſpeaker, covers the ridicule of it, or more properly converts it into an object of our *eſteem.*

We have here, then, a kind of *intermediate* ſpecies of *humour* betwixt the *ridiculous* and the *grave* ; and may perceive how inſenſibly the *one* becomes the *other*, by the accidental mixture of a virtuous *quality*, attracting *eſteem.* Which may ſerve to reconcile the reader to the application of this *term* even to ſuch *expreſſion* of the manners, as is perfectly *ſerious* ; that is, where the *quality repreſented* is entirely, and without the leaſt *touch* of attending ridicule, the object of *moral approbation* to the mind. As in that famous aſſeveration of Chremes in the *Self-tormentor :*

Homo ſum : humani nihil à me alienum puto.

This is a ſtrong expreſſion of character ; and coming unaffectedly from him in anſwer to the cutting reproof of his friend,

[*Chreme, tantumne ab re tuâſt otî tibi*
Aliena ut cures; ea quae nihil ad te adtinent?]

hath the eſſence of true *humour*, that is, is *a lively picture of the manners without deſign.*

Yet in this inſtance, which hath not been obſerved, the *humour*, though of a ſerious caſt, is heightened by a mixture of *ſatire*. For we are not to take this, as hath conſtantly been done, for a ſentiment of pure humanity and the natural ebullition of benevolence. We may obſerve in it a deſigned ſtroke of ſatirical reſentment. *The Self-tormentor*, as we ſaw, had ridiculed Chremes' *curioſity* by a ſevere reproof. Chremes, to be even with him, reflects upon the *inhumanity* of his temper. "You, ſays he, ſeem "ſuch a foe to humanity, that you ſpare it not *in yourſelf*; "I, on the other hand, am affected, when I ſee it ſuffer "in *another*."

Whence we learn, that, though all which is requiſite to conſtitute comic humour, be *a juſt expreſſion of character without deſign*, yet ſuch *expreſſion* is felt more *ſenſibly*, when it is further enlivened by *ridicule*, or quickned by the poignancy of *ſatire*.

[III.] From the account of comedy, here given, it may appear, that the idea of this drama is much enlarged beyond what it was in Ariſtotle's time; who defines it to be, *an imitation of light and trivial actions, provoking ridicule.* His notion was taken from the ſtate and practice of the Athenian ſtage; that is, from the *old or middle* comedy, which anſwers to this deſcription. The great revolution, which the introduction of the *new comedy* made in the drama, did not happen till afterwards. This propoſed for its *object*, in general, *the actions and characters of ordinary life*; which are not, of neceſſity, ridiculous, but, as appears to every obſerver, of a mixt kind, *ſerious*, as well as *ludicrous*, and, within their proper ſphere of influence, not unfrequently even *important*. This kind of *imitation* therefore, now, admits the *ſerious*; and its ſcenes, even without the leaſt mixture of *pleaſantry*, are entirely *comic*. Tho' the common run of *laughers* in our theatre are ſo little aware of the extenſion of this *province*, that I ſhould ſcarcely have hazarded the obſervation, but for the authority

thority of *Terence*; who hath confeſſedly very little of the *pleaſant* in his drama. Nay, one of the moſt admired of his comedies hath the gravity, and, in ſome places, almoſt the ſolemnity of *tragedy itſelf*.

But this *idea* of comedy is not peculiar to the more polite and liberal *antients*. Some of the beſt *modern* comedies are faſhioned in agreement to it. And an inſtance or two, which I am going to produce from the ſtage of ſimple nature, may ſeem to ſhew it the plain ſuggeſtion of common ſenſe.

"The Amautas (ſays the author of the *Royal Commentaries of* PERU) who were men of the beſt ingenuity amongſt them, invented COMEDIES and TRAGEDIES; which, on their ſolemn feſtivals, they repreſented before the King and the Lords of his court. The plot or argument of their *tragedies* was to repreſent *their military exploits, and the triumphs, victories, and heroic actions of their renowned men.* And the ſubject or deſign of their *comedies* was, to demonſtrate *the manner of good huſbandry in cultivating and manuring their fields, and to ſhew the management of domeſtic affairs, with other familiar matters.* Theſe plays, continues he, were not made up of obſcene and diſhoneſt farces, but ſuch as were of *ſerious entertainment, compoſed of grave and acute ſentences, &c.*"

Two things are obſervable in this brief account of the Peruvian drama. *Firſt*, that its *ſpecies* had reſpect to the very different *objects* of the *higher* or *lower* ſtations. For the *great and powerful* were occupied in *war:* and *agriculture* was the chief employment of *private and ordinary life*. And, in this diſtinction, theſe *Indian*, perfectly agreed with the old Roman poets; whoſe PRAETEXTATA and TOGATA ſhew, that they had preciſely the ſame ideas of the drama. *Secondly*, we do not learn only, what difference there *was* betwixt their tragedy and comedy, but we are, alſo, told, what difference there was *not*. It was not, that *one* was *ſerious*, and the other *pleaſant*. For we find it expreſly aſſerted of *both*, that they *were of grave and ſerious entertainment*.

And

And this laſt will explain a ſimilar obſervation on the Chineſe, *who*, as P. DE PREMERE acquaints us, *make no diſtinction betwixt tragedies and comedies.* That is, *no diſtinction*, but what the different *ſubjects* of each make neceſſary. They do not, as our European dramas, differ in this, that the *one* is intended to make us *weep*, and the other to make us *laugh*.

Theſe are full and preciſe teſtimonies. For I lay no ſtreſs on what the Hiſtorian of *Peru* tells us, *that there were no obſcenities in their comedy*; nor on what an encomiaſt of *China* pretends, *that there is not ſo much as an obſcene word in all their language*[c]: as being ſenſible, that, though indeed, theſe muſt needs be conſiderable abatements to the *humour* of their comic ſcenes, yet, their ingenuity might poſſibly find means to remedy theſe defects by the invention and dextrous application of the *double entendre*, which, on our ſtage, is found to ſupply the place of rank *obſcenity*, and, indeed, to do its office of exciting *laughter* almoſt as well.

But, as I ſaid, there is no occaſion for this *argument*. We may venture, without the help of it, to join theſe authorities to *that* of Terence; which, together, enable us to conclude very fully, in oppoſition to the general ſentiment, that *ridicule is not of the eſſence of comedy*[d].

But, becauſe the general practice of the *Greek and Roman theatres*, which ſtrongly countenance the other opinion, may ſtill be thought to outweigh this ſingle *Latin poet*, together with all the *eaſtern and weſtern barbarians*, that can be thrown into the balance, let me go one ſtep further, and, by explaining the riſe and occaſion of this *practice*, demonſtrate, that, in the preſent caſe, their authority is, in fact, of no moment.

[c] P. ALVAREZ SEMEDO, ſpeaking of their poetry, ſays, "Le plus grand "advantage & la plus grande utilité qu'en ont tiré les CHINOIS, eſt cette "grande modeſtie & retenüe incomparable, qui ſe void en leurs ecrits, *n'ayant "pas meſme une lettre en tous leurs livres, ny en toutes leurs eſcritures, pour ex-"primer les parties honteuſes de la nature.*" [HIST. UNIV. DE LA CHINE, p. 82. à LYON 1667. 4to.]

[d] LE RIDICULE EST CE QU'IL Y A DE PLUS ESSENTIEL A LA COMEDIE. [P. RAPIN. REFLEX. SUR LA POET, p. 154. PARIS 1684.]

The

The form of the Greek, from whence the Roman and our drama is taken, though greatly *improved* by reflexion and juſt criticiſm, yet, like ſo many other great inventions, was, in its original, the *product* of pure chance. Each of its ſpecies had ſprung out of a *chorus-ſong*, which was afterwards incorporated into the legitimate drama, and found eſſential to its true form. But *reaſon*, which ſaw to eſtabliſh what was *right* in this fortuitous conformation of the drama, did not equally ſucceed in detecting and ſeparating what was *wrong*. For the *occaſion* of this chorus-ſong, in their religious feſtivities, was widely different: the buſineſs, *at one time*, being to expreſs their gratitude, in celebrating the praiſes of their gods and heroes; at *another*, to indulge their mirth, in jeſting and ſporting among themſelves. The character of their drama, which had its riſe from hence [e], conformed exactly to the difference of theſe *occaſions*. *Tragedy*, through all its ſeveral ſucceſſive ſtages of improvement was ſerious and even ſolemn. And a gay or rather buffoon ſpirit was the characteriſtic of *comedy*.

We ſee, then, the *genius* of theſe two poems was accidentally fixed in agreement to their reſpective *originals*; conſequent writers contenting themſelves to embelliſh and perfect, not *change*, the primary form. The practice of the antient ſtage is then of no further authority, than as it accords to juſt criticiſm. The ſolemn caſt of their *tragedy*, indeed, bears the teſt, and is found to be ſuitable to its real

[e] Οἱ μὲν σεμνότεροι, τὰς καλὰς ἐμιμοῦντο πράξεις, καὶ τὰς τοῦ τοιούτου τύχας· οἱ δ' εὐτελέστεροι, τὰς τοῦ φαύλου, ΠΡΩΤΟΝ ΨΟΓΟΥΣ ΠΟΙΟΥΝΤΕΣ, ΩΣΠΕΡ ΕΤΕΡΟΙ ΥΜΝΟΥΣ ΚΑΙ ΕΓΚΩΜΙΑ. [ΠΕΡ. ΠΟΙΗΤ. κ. δ.] This is Ariſtotle's account of the origin of the different *ſpecies of* POETRY. They were occaſioned, he ſays, by the different and even oppoſite *tempers and diſpoſitions of men: thoſe of a loftier ſpirit delighting in the encomiaſtic poetry, while the humbler ſort betook themſelves to ſatire.* But this, alſo, is the juſt account of the riſe and character of the different *ſpecies of the* DRAMA. For they grew up, he tells us in this very chapter, from the DITHYRAMBIC, and PHALLIC, ſongs. And who were the *men*, who chaunted *theſe*, but the ΣΕΜΝΟΤΕΡΟΙ, and ΕΥΤΕΛΕΣΤΕΡΟΙ, before mentioned? And how were they *employed* in them, but the *former, in hymning the praiſes of Bacchus*; the *latter, in dealing about obſcene jokes and taunting invectives on each other?* So that the *characters* of the men, and their *ſubjects*, being exactly the ſame in *both*, what is ſaid of the *one* is equally applicable to the *other*. It was proper to obſerve this, or the reader might, perhaps, object to the uſe, made of this paſſage, *here*, as well as *above*, where it is brought to illuſtrate Ariſtotle's notion of the *natures* of the tragic and comic poetry.

nature.

nature. The ſame doth not appear of the burleſque form of *comedy*; no reaſon having been given, why *it* muſt, of neceſſity, have the *ridiculous* for its object. Nay, the effects of improved criticiſm on the later Greek comedy give a preſumption of the direct contrary. For, in proportion to the gradual refinement of this *ſpeices* in the hands of its greateſt maſters, the buffoon caſt of the comic drama was inſenſibly dropt and even grew into a ſeverity, which departed, at length, very widely from the original idea. The admirable ſcholar of THEOPHRASTUS, who had been tutored in the exact ſtudy of human life, ſaw ſo much of the genuin character of true comedy, that he cleanſed it, at once, from the greater part of thoſe buffoonries, which had, till his time, defiled its nature. His great imitator, Terence went ſtill further; and, whether impelled by his native humour, or determined by his truer taſte, mixed ſo little of the *ridiculous* in his comedy, as plainly ſhews, it might, in his opinion, ſubſiſt entirely without it. His *practice*, indeed, and the *theory*, here delivered, nearly meet. And the concluſion is, that *comedy*, which is the image of private life, may take either character of *pleaſant* or *ſerious*, as it chances, or even *unite* them into one piece; but that the *former* is, by no means, more eſſential to its conſtitution, than the *latter*.

I foreſee but one objection, that can be made to this theory; which has, in effect, been obviated already. "It "may be ſaid, that, if this account of *comedy* be juſt, it "would follow, that it might, with equal propriety, admit "the graveſt and moſt affecting events, which inferior "life furniſhes, as the lighteſt. Whereas it is notorious, "that diſtreſſes of a deep and ſolemn nature, though "faithfully copied from the fortunes of private men, would "never be endured, under the name of *comedy*, on the "ſtage. Nay, ſuch repreſentations would rather paſs, in "the public judgment, for legitimate *tragedies*; of which "kind, we have, indeed, ſome examples in our language."

Two things are miſtaken in this objection. *Firſt*, it ſuppoſes, that deep diſtreſſes of every kind are inconſiſtent with comedy; the contrary of which may be learnt from the SELF-TORMENTOR of Terence. *Next*, it inſinuates,

ſinuates, that, if deep diſtreſſes of any kind may be admitted into comedy, the *deepeſt* may. Which is equally erroneous. For the *manners*, being the proper object of comedy, the *diſtreſs* muſt not exceed a certain degree of *ſeverity*, leſt it draw off the mind from them, and confine it to the *action* only: as would be the caſe of *adultery*, *murder*, and other atrocious crimes, infeſting *private*, as well as *public*, life, were they to be repreſented, in all their horrors, on the ſtage. And though ſome of theſe, as *adultery*, have been brought, of late, into the comic ſcene, yet it was not till it had loſt the atrocity of its nature, and was made the ſubject of mirth and pleaſantry to the faſhionable world. But for this happy diſpoſition of the times, comedy, as managed by ſome of our writers, had loſt its nature, and become *tragic*. And, yet, conſidered as *tragic*, ſuch repreſentations of low life had been improper. Becauſe, where the intent is to *affect*, the ſubject is with more advantage taken from *high life*, all the circumſtances being, there, more peculiarly adapted to anſwer that end.

The ſolution, then, of the difficulty is, in one word, this. All *diſtreſſes* are not *improper* in comedy; but ſuch only as attach the mind to the *fable*, in neglect of the *manners*, which are its chief object. On the other hand, all *diſtreſſes* are not *proper* in tragedy; but ſuch only as are of force to intereſt the mind in the *action*, preferably to the obſervation of the *manners*; which can only be done, or is done moſt effectually, when the *diſtreſsful event*, repreſented, is taken from *public life*. So that the *diſtreſſes*, ſpoken of, are equally unſuited to what the natures *both* of *comedy and tragedy*, reſpectively, demand.

And thus much for the general idea of COMEDY.

IV. If conſidered more accurately it is, further, of *two kinds*. And in conſidering theſe we ſhall come at a juſt notion of the province of FARCE. For this *mirror of private life* either, 1. reflects ſuch qualities and characters, as are common *to human nature at large:* or; 2. it repreſents the whims, extravagances, and caprices, which characterize the folly of *particular perſons or times*.

Again,

Again, *each* of theſe is, further, to be ſubdivided into *two ſpecies*. For, 1. the repreſentations of *common nature* may either be taken *accurately*, ſo as to reflect *a faithful and exact image* of their original; which alone is *that* I would call COMEDY, as beſt agreeing to that deſcription which Cicero gives of it, when he terms it IMAGINEM VERITATIS. Or, they may be forced and overcharged above the ſimple and juſt porportions of *nature*; and then they hold of the lower province of FARCE. In like manner, 2. the other *ſpecies*, conſiſting in the repreſentation of *partial nature*, either tranſcribes ſuch characters, as are peculiar to *certain countries or times*, of which *our comedy* is, in great meaſure, made up, or, it preſents the image of *ſome real individual perſon*; which was the diſtinguiſhing character of the *old comedy*, properly ſo called.

Both theſe kinds evidently belong to FARCE: not only as failing in that general and univerſal imitation of nature, which is alone deſerving the name of comedy, but, alſo, for this reaſon, that, being more directly written for the preſent purpoſe of diſcrediting certain *characters* or *perſons*, it is found convenient to exaggerate their peculiarities and enlarge their features; and ſo, on a double account, they are to be referred to that *claſs*.

And thus the *three forms of dramatic compoſition*, the only ones, which good ſenſe acknowledges, are kept diſtinct; and the proper END and CHARACTER, of each, clearly underſtood.

1. *Tragedy and comedy*, by their lively but faithful repreſentations, cannot fail to *inſtruct*. Such natural exhibitions of the human character, being ſet before us in the clear mirror of the drama, muſt needs ſerve to the higheſt *moral uſes*, in awakening that inſtinctive approbation, which we cannot withhold from *virtue*, or in provoking the not leſs neceſſary deteſtation of *vice*. But this, though it be their beſt *uſe*, is, by no means, their primary *intention*. Their proper and immediate *end*, is, to PLEASE: the *one*, more eſpecially, by intereſting the *affections*; the *other*, by *a juſt and delicate imitation of real life*. *Farce*, on the contrary, profeſſes to *entertain*, but this, in order more effectually to ſerve the intereſts of virtue and good ſenſe.

ſenſe. Its proper *end* and purpoſe is, then, to INSTRUCT. Which the reader will underſtand me as ſaying, not of what we know by the name of *farce* on the modern ſtage (whoſe *prime* intention can hardly be thought even that low one, aſcribed to it by Mr. Dryden, *of* entertaining *citizens, country-gentlemen, and Covent-Garden fops*) but of the proper and legitimate *end* of this *drama*; which, as the ſame excellent perſon obſerved, but with leſs propriety, of *comedy, is a ſharp manner of* inſtruction *for the vulgar, who are never well amended, till they are more than ſufficiently expoſed.* [Pref. to Tranſ. of Freſnoy, p. xix.]

2. Though tragedy and comedy reſpect the *ſame general* END, yet, purſuing it by *different means*, hence it comes to paſs, their CHARACTERS are wholly different. For tragedy, aiming at *pleaſure*, principally through the *affections*, whoſe flow muſt not be checked and interrupted by any counter impreſſions; and comedy, as we have ſeen, addreſſing itſelf *principally* to our *natural ſenſe of reſemblance and imitation*, it follows, that the *ridiculous* can never be aſſociated with tragedy, without deſtroying its *nature*, though with the *ſerious comic* it very well conſiſts.

And here the *practice* coincides with the *rule*. All exact writers, though they conſtantly mix *grave and pleaſant* ſcenes together in the ſame *comedy*, yet never preſume to do this in *tragedy*, and ſo keep the two ſpecies of *tragedy and comedy* themſelves perfectly diſtinct. But,

3. It is quite otherwiſe with *comedy* and *farce*. Theſe almoſt perpetually run into each other. And yet the reaſon of the thing demands as intire and perfect a ſeparation in this caſe, as in the other. For the perfection of *comedy* lying in the accuracy and fidelity of univerſal repreſentation, and *farce* profeſſedly neglecting or rather wantonly tranſgreſſing the limits of common nature and juſt decorum, they claſh entirely with each other. And *comedy* muſt ſo far fail of giving the *pleaſure*, appropriate to its deſign, as it allies itſelf with *farce*; while *farce*, on the other hand, forfeits the *uſe*, it intends, of promoting popular ridicule, by reſtraining itſelf within the cautious rules of *decency*, which *comedy* exacts.

Thus

Thus much, I thought, might deſerve the attention of all writers for the ſtage. For which reaſon I have dwelt the longer upon it. But my immediate purpoſe in this diſquiſition was of another kind. It was to ſhew diſtinctly, wherein the force of the poet's reaſon for the ſuperior difficulty of the *comic drama*, above the others, *that it hath leſs indulgence ſhewn it*," conſiſts; which hath not perhaps been ſeen. "The vulgar opinion, ſays Horace, is, "that comedy, being the repreſentation of ordinary life, "which is perpetually paſſing under obſervation, is moſt "eaſy; but falſely; for the imitation is, here, more eſ-"pecially *required* to be exact." But why? Not ſurely, becauſe the ſubject is taken *ex medio*. This indeed is a good reaſon, why any deviations from real life will be more readily *obſerved* by the ſpectator in comedy, than tragedy. But why, if they are *equally* obſerved by him in both, is he leſs diſpoſed to *forgive* the impropriety in the *one*, than the *other*? The reaſon can be only fetched from the *end* of each ſpecies. Tragedy, whoſe intention is to *affect*, may ſecure what is moſt eſſential to its *kind*, though it fail in ſome minuter reſemblances of *nature*. Comedy, propoſing for its main end *exact repreſentation*, is fundamentally defective, if it do not perfectly ſucceed in it. And this explains the ground of the poet's obſervation, that comedy hath *veniae minus*. But, abſtractedly from this conſideration, he might have aſſerted the ſuperior hazard of ſucceeding in this drama, in that the execution of it hath, really, *plus ſudoris*. For tragedy, whoſe end is the *pathos*, produces it by *action*, while comedy produces its end, the *humourous*, by *character*. Now it is much more difficult to paint manners, than to plan action; becauſe *that* requires the philoſopher's knowledge of human nature, *this* only the hiſtorian's knowledge of human events.

177. QUEM TULIT AD SCENAM VENTOSO GLORIA CURRU, EXANIMAT LENTUS SPECTATOR, &c. to ℣ 182.] There is an exquiſite ſpirit of pleaſantry in theſe lines, which hath quite evaporated in the hands of the critics. Theſe have gravely ſuppoſed them to come from the perſon of the *poet*, and to contain his ſerious cenſure of the vanity

vanity of poetic fame. Whereas, beſides the manifeſt abſurdity of the thing, its inconſiſtency with what is delivered elſewhere on this ſubject [A. P. ℣ 324.] where the Greeks are commended as being *praeter laudem nullius avari*, abſolutely requires us to underſtand them as proceeding from an *objector*; who, as the poet hath very ſatirically contrived, is left to expoſe himſelf in the very terms of his *objection*. He had juſt been blaming the venality of the Roman dramatic writers. They had ſhewn themſelves more ſollicitous about *filling their pockets*, than deſerving the reputation of good poets. And, inſtead of inſiſting further on the excellency of this *latter* motive, he ſtops ſhort and brings in a bad poet himſelf to laugh at it.

"And what then, ſays he, you would have us yield "ourſelves to the very wind and guſt of praiſe; and, drop- "ping all inferior conſiderations, drive away to the ex- "pecting ſtage in the *puffed car of vain-glory?* For what? "To be *diſpirited*, or blown up with air, as the capricious "ſpectator ſhall think fit to enforce, or withhold, his *in-* "*ſpirations*. And is this the mighty benefit of your "vaunted paſſion for fame? No; farewel the ſtage, if the "breath of others is to be *that*, on which the ſilly bard "depends for the contraction or enlargement of his di- "menſions." To all which convincing rhetoric the poet condeſcends to ſay nothing; as well knowing, that no truer ſervice is, often times, done to virtue and good ſenſe, than when a knave or fool is left to himſelf, *in propriâ perſonâ*, to employ his idle raillery againſt either.

Theſe interlocutory paſſages, laying open the ſentiments of thoſe, againſt whom the poet is diſputing, are very frequent in the *critical and moral* writings of Horace, and are well ſuited to their dramatic genius and original.

210. ILLE PER EXTENTUM FUNEM &c.] The Romans, who were immoderately addicted to ſpectacles of every kind, had in particular eſteem the *funambuli*, or *rope-dancers*;

[*Ita populus ſtudio ſtupidus in* FUNAMBULO
Animum occuparat. PROL. IN HECYR.]

from the admiration of whoſe tricks the expreſſion, *ire*

per extentum funem, came to denote, proverbially, *an uncommon degree of excellence and perfection in any thing*. The alluſion is, here, made with much pleaſantry, as the poet had juſt been raillying their fondneſs for theſe *extraordinary atchievements*.

210. ILLE PER EXTENTUM FUNEM &c. to ℣ 214.] It is obſervable, that Horace, here, makes his own *feeling* the teſt of poetical merit. Which is ſaid with a philoſophical exactneſs. For the *pathos* in tragic, *humour* in comic, and the ſame holds of the *ſublime* in the narrative, and of every other *ſpecies* of excellence in univerſal poetry, is the object not of *reaſon* but *ſentiment*; and can be eſtimated only from its *impreſſions* on the mind, not by any ſpeculative or general *rules*. Rules themſelves are indeed nothing elſe but an appeal to *experience*; concluſions drawn from wide and general obſervation of the aptneſs and efficacy of certain *means* to produce thoſe *impreſſions*. So that feeling or ſentiment itſelf is not only the ſureſt but the ſole *ultimate* arbiter of works of genius.

Yet, though this be true, the *invention* of *general rules* is not without its merit, nor the *application* of them without its *uſe*, as may appear from the following conſiderations.

It may be affirmed, univerſally, of all *didactic writing*, that it is employed in *referring particular facts to general principles*. General principles themſelves can often be referred to others more general; and theſe again carried ſtill higher, till we come to a *ſingle* principle, in which all the reſt are involved. When this is done, ſcience of every kind hath attained its higheſt perfection.

The account, here given, might be illuſtrated from various inſtances. But it will be ſufficient to confine ourſelves to the ſingle one of *criticiſm*; by which I underſtand that *ſpecies* of didactic writing, which *refers to general rules the virtues and faults of compoſition*. And the perfection of this art would conſiſt in an ability to refer *every* beauty and blemiſh to a ſeparate claſs; and *every* claſs, by a gradual progreſſion, to ſome *one* ſingle principle. But the *art* is, as yet, far ſhort of perfection. For many of theſe beauties and blemiſhes can be referred to no general rule at all; and

and the rules, which have been diſcovered, ſeem many of them unconnected and not reducible to a common principle. It muſt be admitted however that ſuch critics are employed in their proper office, as contribute to the *confirmation* of rules already eſtabliſhed, or the *invention* of new ones.

Rules already eſtabliſhed are then *confirmed*, when more *particulars* are referred to them. The invention of *new* rules implies, 1. A *collection* of various particulars, not yet regulated. 2. A *diſcovery* of thoſe circumſtances of *reſemblance* or *agreement*, whereby they become capable of being regulated. And 3. A ſubſequent *regulation* of them, or arrangement into *one* claſs according to *ſuch* circumſtances of *agreement*. When this is done, the rule is completed. But if the critic is not able to obſerve any *common* circumſtance of reſemblance in the ſeveral particulars, he hath collected, by which they may, all of them, be referred to one general claſs, he hath then made no advancement in the *art of criticiſm*. Yet the collection of his particular obſervations may be of uſe to other critics; juſt as collections of natural hiſtory, though no part of philoſophy, may yet aſſiſt philoſophical inquirers.

We ſee then from this general view of the matter, that the *merit* of inventing *general rules* conſiſts in reducing criticiſm to an *art*; and that the *uſe* of applying them, in practice, when the art is thus formed, is, to direct the caprices of *taſte* by the authority of rule, which we call *reaſon*.

And, thus much being premiſed, we ſhall now be able to form a proper judgment of the *method*, which ſome of the moſt admired of the antients, as well as moderns, have taken in this *work of criticizing*. The moſt eminent, at leaſt the moſt popular are, perhaps, Longinus, of the Greeks; P. Bouhours, of the French; and Mr. Addiſon, with us in England.

1. *All* the beautiful paſſages, which Longinus cites, are referred by him to *five* general claſſes. And 2dly, Theſe general claſſes belong all to the *common* principle of *ſublimity*. He does not ſay this paſſage is *excellent*, but aſſigns the *kind* of excellence, *viz. ſublimity*. Neither does he content himſelf with the general notion of *ſublimity*, but names the *ſpecies*, viz. *Grandeur* of *ſentiment*,

power of moving the *paſſions*, &c. His work therefore enables us to *claſs* our perceptions of excellence, and conſequently is formed on the *true plan* of criticiſm.

2. The ſame may be obſerved of P. BOURHOURS. The paſſages, cited by him, are never mentioned *in general* terms as *good* or *bad:* but are inſtances of good or bad *ſentiment*. This is the *genus*, in which *all* his inſtances are comprehended: but of this genus he marks alſo the diſtinct *ſpecies*. He does not ſay, this ſentiment is *good*; but it is *ſublime*, or *natural*, or *beautiful*, or *delicate:* or, that another ſentiment is *bad*; but that it is *mean*, or *falſe*, or *deformed*, or *affected*. To theſe ſeveral claſſes he refers his particular inſtances: and theſe claſſes themſelves are referred to the more comprehenſive principles of the excellence or fault of *ſingle ſentiment*, as oppoſed to the various *other* excellencies and faults, which are obſerved in compoſition.

3. Mr. ADDISON, in his *criticiſm on Milton*, proceeded in like manner. For, *firſt*, theſe remarks are evidently applicable to the general obſervations on the poem; in which every thing is referred to the common heads of *fable*, *morals*, *ſentiments*, and *language*; and even the *ſpecific* excellences and faults conſidered under each head diſtinctly marked out. *Secondly*, The ſame is true concerning *many* of the obſervations on particular paſſages. The reader is not only told, that a paſſage *has* merit; but is informed what *ſort* of merit belongs to it.

Neither are the remaining obſervations wholly without uſe. For ſuch particular beauties and blemiſhes, as are barely *collected*, may yet ſerve as a foundation to future inquirers for making further diſcoveries. They may be conſidered as ſo many *ſingle* facts, an *attention* to which is excited by the authority of the critic; and when theſe are conſidered jointly with ſuch as *others* may have obſerved, thoſe general principles of *ſimilitude* may at length be found, which ſhall enable us to conſtitute *new* claſſes of poetical merit or blame.

Thus far the candid reader may go in apologizing for the *merits* of theſe writers. But as, in ſound criticiſm, candour ſhould give place to *juſtice*, I think myſelf obliged to add an obſervation concerning their *defects*; and *that*, on what I muſt think the juſt principles here delivered.

Though

Though the method, taken by theſe writers, be *ſcientifical*, the real ſervice, they have done to criticiſm, is not very conſiderable. And the reaſon is, they dwell too much in *generals*: that is, not only the *genus*, to which they refer their *ſpecies*, is too large, but thoſe very ſubordinate ſpecies themſelves are too comprehenſive.

Of the *three* critics, under conſideration, the moſt inſtructive is, unqueſtionably, *Longinus*. The *genus* itſelf, under which he ranks his ſeveral *claſſes*, is as *particular*, as the ſpecies of the other two. Yet even *his* claſſes are much too general to convey any very diſtinct and uſeful information. It had been ſtill better, if this fine critic had deſcended to lower and more minute *particularities*, as ſubordinate to *each claſs*. For to obſerve of any *ſentiment*, that it is *grand*, or *pathetic*, and ſo of the other *ſpecies* of ſublime, is ſaying very little. Few readers want to be informed of this. It had been ſufficient, if any notice was to be taken at all of ſo *general* beauties, to have done it in the way, which ſome of the beſt critics have taken, of merely pointing to them. But could he have diſcovered and produced to obſervation thoſe *peculiar* qualities in *ſentiment*, which occaſion the impreſſion of *grandeur*, *pathos*, *&c.* this had been advancing the ſcience of criticiſm very much, as tending to lay open the more ſecret and hidden ſprings of that *pleaſure*, which reſults from poetical compoſition.

P. Bouhours, as I obſerved, is ſtill more faulty. His very *ſpecies* are ſo large, as make his criticiſm almoſt wholly uſeleſs and inſignificant.

It gives one pain to refuſe to ſuch a writer, as Mr. *Addiſon*, any *kind* of merit, to which he appears to have laid claim, and which the generality have ſeemed willing to allow him. Yet it muſt not be diſſembled, that *criticiſm* was, by no means, his talent. His taſte was truly elegant; but he had neither that vigour of underſtanding, nor chaſtiſed, philoſophical ſpirit, which are ſo eſſential to this character, and which we find in hardly any of the antients, beſides Ariſtotle, and but in a very view of the moderns. For what concerns his *criticiſm on Milton* in particular, there was this accidental benefit ariſing from it, that it occaſioned an admirable poet to be read, and his

excellencies to be obſerved. But for the merit of the work itſelf, if there be any thing juſt in the *plan*, it was, becauſe Ariſtotle and Boſſu had taken the ſame route before him. And as to his *own* proper obſervations, they are for the moſt part, ſo general and indeterminate, as to afford but little inſtruction to the reader, and are, not unfrequently, altogether frivolous. They are of a kind with thoſe, in which the French critics (for I had rather inſtance in the defects of *foreign* writers than of our *own*) ſo much abound; and which good judges agree to rank in the worſt ſort of criticiſm. To give one example; for all.

Cardinal PERRON, taking occaſion to commend certain pieces of the poet RONSARD, chuſes to deliver himſelf in the following manner: "Prenez de lui quelque poëme "que ce ſoit, il paye toujours ſon lecteur, & quand la "verve le prend, il ſe guinde en haut, il vous porte juſques "dans les nuës, il vous fait voir mille belles choſes.

"Que ſes *ſaiſons* ſont *bien-faites!* Que la deſcription "de la lyre a Bertaut eſt *admirable!* Que le diſcours au "miniſtre, *excellent!* Tous ſes hymnes ſont *beaux*. Celui "de l'eternité eſt *admirable*; ceux des ſaiſons marveil-"leux." [Perroniana.]

What now has the reader learned from this varied criticiſm, but that his *Eminence* was indeed very fond of his poet; and that he eſteemed theſe ſeveral pieces to be (what with leſs expence of words he might, in one breath, have called them) *well-turned*, *beautiful*, *excellent*, *admirable*, *marvellous*, poems? To have given us the true character of *each*, and to have marked the preciſe *degree*, as well as *kind*, of merit in theſe works, had been a taſk of another nature.

211. QUI PECTUS INANITER ANGIT,] The word *inaniter* as well as *falſi*, applied in the following line to *terrores*, would expreſs that wondrous force of *dramatic repreſentation*, which compels us to take part in *feigned* adventures and ſituations, as if they were *real*; and exerciſes the paſſions with the ſame violence, in *remote fancied ſcenes*, as in the *preſent diſtreſſes of real life*.

And this is that ſovereign quality in poetry, which, as an old writer of our own naturally expreſſes it, is of force

to

to hold children from play, and old men from the chimney-corner. The poet, in the place before us, conſiders it as a kind of *magic virtue*, which tranſports the ſpectator into all *places*, and makes him, occaſionally, aſſume all *perſons*. The reſemblance holds, alſo, in this, that its effects are inſtantaneous and irreſiſtible. *Rules*, *art*, *decorum*, all fall before it. It goes directly to the *heart*, and gains all purpoſes at once. Hence it is, that, ſpeaking of a real genius, poſſeſſed of this commanding power, Horace pronounces him, emphatically, THE POET,

[*Ille per extentum funem mihi poſſe videtur*
Ire POETA.]

it being more eſpecially this property, which, of itſelf, diſcovers the *true dramatiſt*, and ſecures the ſucceſs of his performance, not only without the aſſiſtance of *art*, but in direct oppoſition to its cleareſt dictates.

This power has been felt on a thouſand other occaſions. But its triumphs were never more conſpicuous, than in the famous inſtance of the CID of P. Corneille; which, by the ſole means of this enchanting quality, drew along with it the affections and applauſes of a whole people: notwithſtanding the manifeſt tranſgreſſion of ſome eſſential rules: the utmoſt tyranny of jealous power: and, what is more, in defiance of all the authority and good ſenſe of one of the juſteſt pieces of criticiſm in the French language, written purpoſely to diſcredit and expoſe it.

224. CUM LAMENTAMUR NON ADPARERE LABORES NOSTROS, &c.] It was remarked upon ℣ 211, that the beauties of a poem can only *appear* by being felt. And *they*, to whom they do not appear in this inſtance, are the writer's own *friends*, who, it is not to be ſuppoſed, would diſguiſe their *feelings*. So that the *lamentation*, here ſpoken of, is at once a proof of *impertinence* in the poet, and of the *badneſs* of his poetry, which ſets the complainant in a very ridiculous light.

232. GRATUS ALEXANDRO REGI MAGNO &c.] This praiſe of Auguſtus, ariſing from the compariſon of his character with that of Alexander, is extremely fine. It

had been obſerved of the Macedonian by his hiſtorians and panegyriſts, that, to the ſtern virtues of the *conqueror*, he had joined the ſofter accompliſhments of the *virtuoſo*, in a juſt diſcernment and love of *poetry*, and of the *elegant arts*. The *one* was thought clear from his admiration and ſtudy of Homer. And the *other*, from his famous edict concerning Apelles and Lyſippus, could not be denied. Horace finds means of turn both theſe circumſtances in his ſtory to the advantage of his prince.

From his extravagant pay of ſuch a wretched verſifier, as *Chœrilus*, he would inſinuate, that Alexander's love of the muſe was, in fact, but a blind unintelligent impulſe towards *glory*. And from his greater ſkill in the arts of *ſculpture* and *painting*, than of *verſe*, he repreſents him as more concerned about the *drawing* of his figure, than the pourtraiture of his *manners and mind*. Whereas Auguſtus, by his liberalities to *Varius* and *Virgil* had diſcovered the trueſt taſte in the *art*, from which he expected immortality: and, in truſting to *that*, as the *chief* inſtrument of his fame, had confeſſed a prior regard to thoſe *mental virtues*, which are the real ornament of humanity, before that *look of terror*, and *air and attitude of victory*, in which the brute violence of Alexander moſt delighted to be ſhewn.

243. MUSARUM DONA] The expreſſion is happy; as implying, that theſe *images* of virtue, which are repreſented as of ſuch importance to the glory of princes, are not the mere *offerings* of poetry to greatneſs, but the *free-gifts* of the muſe to the poet. For it is only to ſuch *works*, as theſe, that Horace attributes the wondrous efficacy of expreſſing the *manners and mind* in fuller and more durable relief, than *ſculpture* gives to the *exterior figure*.

Non magis expreſſi vultus per aënea ſigna,
Quam per vatis opus mores animique virorum
Clarorum adparent.

247. DILECTI TIBI VIRGILIUS &c.] It does honour to the memory of Auguſtus, that he bore the *affection*, here ſpoken of, to this amiable poet; who was not more diſtinguiſhed from his contemporary writers by the

the force of an original, inventive genius, than the ſingular benevolence and humanity of his character. Yet there have been critics of ſo perverſe a turn, as to diſcover an inclination, at leaſt, of diſputing both.

1. Some have taken offence at his ſuppoſed unfriendly neglect of Horace, who, on every occaſion, ſhewed himſelf ſo ready to laviſh all his praiſes on him. But the folly of this ſlander is of a piece with its malignity, as proceeding on the abſurd fancy, that Virgil's friends might as eaſily have ſlid into ſuch works, as the Georgics and Æneïs, as thoſe of Horace into the various occaſional poems, which employed his pen.

Juſt ſuch another ſenſeleſs ſuſpicion hath been raiſed of his jealouſy of Homer's ſuperior glory (a vice, from which the nature of the great poet was ſingularly abhorrent) only, becauſe he did not think fit to give him the firſt place among the poets in *Elyſium*, ſeveral hundred years before he had ſo much as made his appearance upon *earth*.

But theſe petty calumnies of his *moral* character hardly deſerve a confutation. What ſome greater authorities have objected to his *poetical*, may be thought more ſerious. For,

2. It has been given out by ſome of better note amongſt the moderns, and from thence, according to the cuſtomary influence of authority, hath become the prevailing ſentiment of the generality of the learned, that the great poet was more indebted for his fame to the *exactneſs of his judgment*; *to his induſtry, and a certain trick of imitation*, than to the energy of natural genius; which he is thought to have poſſeſſed in a very ſlender degree.

This charge is founded on the ſimilitude, which all acknowledge, betwixt his great work, the Æneïs, and the poems of Homer. But, "how far ſuch ſimilitude infers "imitation;" or, "how far imitation itſelf infers an in-"feriority of natural genius in the imitator," this hath never been conſidered. In ſhort, the affair of *imitation* in poetry, though one of the moſt curious and intereſting in all criticiſm, hath been, hitherto, very little underſtood: as may appear from hence, that there is not, as far as I can learn, one ſingle treatiſe, now extant, written purpoſely

to

to explain it; the diſcourſe, which the learned *Menage* intended, and which, doubtleſs, would have cleared this point, having never, as I know of, been made public. To ſupply, in ſome meaſure, this loſs to the inquiſitive reader, I have thought it not amiſs to put together and methodize a few reflexions of my own on this ſubject, which (becauſe the matter is large, and cannot eaſily be drawn into a compaſs, that ſuits with the nature of theſe occaſional remarks) I have choſen to preſent to him in the form of a diſtinct and ſeparate Diſſertation upon it.

END of the NOTES.

A DIS-

A

DISCOURSE

ON

POETICAL IMITATION.

NULLUM EST JAM DICTUM, QUOD NON DICTUM SIT PRIUS.
QUARE AEQUUM EST VOS COGNOSCERE ATQ. IGNOSCERE
QUAE VETERES FACTITARUNT, SI FACIUNT NOVI.

PROLOG. AD EUNUCHUM.

A DISCOURSE ON POETICAL IMITATION.

HAVING expreſſed my intention to take a larger compaſs in conſidering this ſubject, than it was allowed me to do in diſcuſſing the occaſional points, which offered themſelves in the courſe of the preceding Remarks, I ſhall need no apology to the reader, for conducting him ſomewhat leiſurely, in what follows, though with all the diſpatch, ſo extended a matter will permit, through the ſeveral branches of it. Not that he is to expect from me a complete treatiſe on the ſubject of *Imitation*, or that I ſhall take upon me to ſatisfy every minuter ſcruple, which may be raiſed about it; my ſole view in entering on this new field of criticiſm being to furniſh, if it may be, a pertinent anſwer to the *two following queſtions*, in which the credit of almoſt all great writers, ſince the time of *Homer*, is vitally concerned; *Firſt*, "*Whether* "*what we commonly take for* IMITATION *may not* "*with probability enough, for the moſt part, be* "*accounted for from general cauſes*;" and, *ſecondly*, "*Whether, in the caſe of confeſſed Imitations, any* "*certain*

" *certain and neceſſary concluſion holds to the diſad-*
" *vantage of the natural* GENIUS *of the imitator?*' *Queſtions*, which there ſeems no fit method of reſolving, but by taking, as I ſaid, the matter pretty deep, and deducing it from its *firſt principles*.

SECTION I.

ALL *Poetry*, to ſpeak with Ariſtotle and the Greek critics (if for ſo plain a point authorities be thought wanting) is, properly, *imitation*. It is, indeed, the nobleſt and moſt extenſive of the mimetic arts; having all creation for its object, and ranging the entire circuit of univerſal being. In this view every wondrous *original*, which ages have gazed at, as the offspring of creative fancy; and of which poets themſelves, to do honour to their inventions, have feigned, as of the immortal panoply of their heroes, that it came down from heaven, is itſelf but a *copy*, a tranſcript from ſome brighter page of this vaſt volume of the univerſe. Thus all is *derived*; all is *unoriginal*. And the office of genius is but to ſelect the faireſt forms of things, and to preſent them in due *place* and *circumſtance*, and in the richeſt colouring of *expreſſion*, to the imagination. This primary or original *copying* is what, in our uſual language, we call INVENTION.

Again; of the endleſs variety of theſe *original forms*, which the poet's eye is inceſſantly traverſing, thoſe, which take his attention moſt, his active mimetic faculty prompts him to convert into fair and living *reſemblances*. This magical operation the great philoſopher (whoſe fervid fancy, though it ſometimes obſcures his reaſoning, yet never fails to clear and brighten his imagery) excellently illuſtrates by the ſimilitude of a *mirror*; " *which*, ſays he, *as you turn about and oppoſe to*

" *the*

" *the ſurrounding world, preſents you conſtantly with* " *a* SUN, STARS, *and* SKIES; *with your* OWN, *and* " *every* OTHER *living form; with the* EARTH, *and* " *its ſeveral appendages of* TREES, PLANTS, *and* " FLOWERS[a]." Juſt ſo, wherever the poet turns his glance, the ſhapes of things immediately ſtart forth, and a new correſponding creation reflects the old one. This ſhadowy ideal world, though unſubſtantial as the *American viſion of ſouls*, yet glows with ſuch apparent life, that it becomes, thenceforth, the object of other mirrors, and is itſelf *original* to future reflexions. This ſecondary or derivative image, is what we know by the name of IMITATION.

And here the difficulty, we are about to examine, commences. For the poet, in his quick reſearches through all his ſtores and materials of *beauty*, meeting every where, in his progreſs, theſe *reflected forms*; and deriving from them his ſtock of imagery, as well as from the real ſubſiſting objects of nature, the ſpectator is often at a loſs (for the artiſt himſelf is not always aware of it) to diſcern the *original* from the *copy*; to know, with certainty, if the *ſentiment* or *image*, preſented to him, be directly taken from the *life*, or be itſelf, a lively tranſcript, only, of ſome former copy. And this difficulty is the greater, becauſe the *original*, as well as the *copy*, is always at hand for the poet to turn to, and we can rarely be certain, ſince both were equally in his power, which of the two he choſe to make the object of his own *imitation*. For it is not enough to ſay here, as in the caſe of *reflexions*, that the latter is always the weaker, and of courſe betrays itſelf by the degree of faintneſs, which, of neceſſity, attends a *copy*.

[a] PLATO DE REPUB. lib. x.

This,

This, indeed, hath been ſaid by one, to whoſe judgment a peculiar deference is owing. QUICQUID ALTERI SIMILE EST, NECESSE EST MINUS SIT EO, QUOD IMITATUR[b]. But it holds only of ſtrict and ſcrupulous *imitations*. And of ſuch alone, I think, it was intended; for the explanation follows, *ut umbra corpore, & imago facie, & actus hiſtrionum veris affectibus*; that is, where the artiſt confines himſelf to the ſingle view of taking a faithful and exact tranſcript. And even this can be allowed only, when the copyiſt is of inferior, or at moſt but of equal, talents. Nay, it is not certainly to be relied upon even *then*; as may appear from what we are told of an indifferent painter's [Andrea del Sarto's] copying a portrait of the divine Raphael. The ſtory is well known. But, as an aphoriſm, brought to determine the merits of *imitation*, in general, nothing can be falſer or more deluſive. For, 1. Beſides the ſuppoſed *original*, the object itſelf, as was obſerved, is before the poet, and he may catch from thence, and infuſe into his piece the ſame glow of real life, which animated the *firſt copy*. 2. He may alſo, take in circumſtances, omitted or overlooked before in the *common* object, and ſo give new and additional vigour to his imitation. Or, 3. He may poſſeſs a ſtronger, and more plaſtic genius, and therefore be enabled to touch, with more force of expreſſion, even thoſe particulars, which he profeſſedly imitates.

On all theſe accounts, the difficulty of diſtinguiſhing betwixt *original*, and *ſecondary*, imitations is apparent. And it is of importance, that this *difficulty* be ſeen in its full light. Becauſe, if the

[b] QUINCTIL. lib. x. c. 11.

ſimilarity, obſerved in two or more writers, may, for the moſt part, and with the higheſt probability, be accounted for from *general principles*, it is ſuperfluous at leaſt, if not unfair, to have recourſe to the *particular* charge of *imitation*.

Now to ſee how far the ſame common principles of nature will go towards effecting the *ſimilarity*, here ſpoken of, it is neceſſary to conſider very diſtinctly

I. THE MATTER; *and*

II. THE MANNER, *of all poetical imitation*:

I. In all that range of *natural objects*, over which the reſtleſs imagination of the poet expatiates, there is no ſubject of picture or imitation, that is not reducible to one or other of the *three following claſſes*. 1. The *material world, or that vaſt compages of corporeal forms, of which this univerſe is compounded*. 2. *The internal workings and movements of his own mind, under which I comprehend the manners, ſentiments, and paſſions*. 3. *Thoſe internal operations, as are made objective to ſenſe by the outward ſigns of geſture, attitude, or action*. Beſides theſe, I know of no ſource, from whence the artiſt can derive a ſingle ſentiment or image. There needs no new diſtinction in favour of *Homer's gods*, *Milton's angels*, or *Shakeſpear's witches*; it being clear, that theſe are only *human* characters, diverſified by ſuch attributes and manners, as ſuperſtition, religion, or even wayward fancy, had aſſigned to each.

1. The material univerſe, or what the painters call *ſtill life*, is the *object* of that ſpecies of poetical imitation, we call *deſcriptive*. This beauteous arrangement of natural objects, which arreſts the attention on all ſides, makes a neceſſary and force-

able impreſſion on the human mind. We are ſo conſtituted, as to have a quick *perception* of beauty in the *forms*, *combinations*, and *aſpects* of things about us; which the philoſopher may amuſe himſelf in explaining from remote and inſufficient conſiderations; but conſciouſneſs and common feeling will never ſuffer us to doubt of its being entirely *natural*. Accordingly we may obſerve, that it operates univerſally on all men; more eſpecially the young and unexperienced; who are not leſs tranſported by the *novelty*, than *beauty* of material objects. But its impreſſions are ſtrongeſt on thoſe, whom nature hath touched with a ray of that celeſtial fire, which we call true *genius*. Here the workings of this inſtinctive ſenſe are ſo powerful, that, to judge from its effects, one ſhould conclude, it perfectly intranced and bore away the mind, as in a fit of rapture. Whenever the form of natural beauty preſents itſelf, though but caſually, to the mind of the poet; buſied, it may be, and intent on the inveſtigation of quite other objects; his imagination takes fire, and it is with difficulty that he reſtrains himſelf from quitting his proper purſuit, and ſtopping awhile to ſurvey and delineate the enchanting image. This is the character of what we call a *luxuriant fancy*, which all the rigour of art can hardly keep down; and we give the higheſt praiſe of judgment to thoſe few, who have been able to diſcipline and confine it within due limits.

I inſiſt the more on this ſtrong *influence of external beauty*, becauſe it leads, I think, to a clear view of the ſubject before us, ſo far as it reſpects *deſcriptive poetry*. Theſe *living forms* are, without any change, preſented to obſervation in every age and country. There needs but opening the eyes,

and

and the lovely objects neceſſarily imprint themſelves on the fancy; and the love of *imitation*, which naturally accompanies and keeps pace with this *ſenſe of beauty* in the poet, is continually urging him to tranſlate them into *deſcription*. Theſe deſcriptions will, indeed, have different degrees of *colouring*, according to the force of genius in the imitator; but the *outlines* are the ſame in all; in the weak, faint ſketches of a Gothic romancer, as in the living pictures of *Homer*.

An inſtance will explain my meaning. Amidſt all that diverſity of natural objects, which the poet delights to paint, nothing is ſo *taking* to his imagination, as *rural ſcenery*; as we may learn from hence, that it always makes the *firſt* effort of *good* poets, and, if *any thing* be of force enough, the firſt movement to animate and inſpirit *bad ones*. Now let us take a deſcription of ſuch a ſcene; ſuppoſe that which *Ælian* hath left us of the Grecian TEMPE, given from the life and without the heightenings of poetic ornament; and we ſhall ſee how little the imagination of the moſt fanciful poets hath ever done towards improving upon it. *Ælian's* deſcription is given in theſe words.

" The Theſſalian TEMPE is a place, ſituate be-
" tween Olympus and Oſſa; which are moun-
" tains of an exceeding great height; and look,
" as if they had once been joined, but were after-
" wards ſeparated from each other, by ſome god,
" for the ſake of opening in the midſt that large
" plain, which ſtretches in length to about five
" miles, and in breadth, a hundred paces, or, in
" ſome parts, more. Through the middle of
" this plain runs the *Peneus*, into which ſeveral
" leſſer currents empty themſelves, and, by the
" confluence of their waters, ſwell it into a river

" of great ſize. This vale is abundantly furniſhed
" with all manner of *arbours and reſting places*;
" not ſuch as the arts of human induſtry contrive,
" but which the bounty of ſpontaneous nature,
" ambitious, as it were, to make a ſhew of all
" her beauties, provided for the ſupply of this
" fair reſidence, in the very original ſtructure and
" formation of the place. For there is plenty of
" *ivy* ſhooting forth in it, which flouriſhes and
" grows ſo thick, that, like the generous and
" leafy vine, it crawls up the trunks of tall trees,
" and twining its foliage round their arms and
" branches, becomes almoſt incorporated with
" them. The flowering *ſmilax* [c] alſo is there in
" great abundance; which running up the acclivi-
" ties of the hills, and ſpreading the cloſe texture
" of its leaves and tendrils on all ſides, perfectly
" covers and ſhades them; ſo that no part of the
" bare rock is ſeen; but the whole is hung with
" the verdure of a thick, inwoven herbage, pre-
" ſenting the moſt agreeable ſpectacle to the eye.
" Along the level of the plain, there are frequent
" tufts of trees, and long continued ranges of ar-
" ching bowers, affording the moſt grateful
" ſhelter from the heats of ſummer; which are
" further relieved by the frequent ſtreams of clear
" and freſh water, continually winding through
" it. The tradition goes, that theſe waters are
" peculiarly good for bathing, and have many
" other medicinal virtues. In the thickets and
" buſhes of this dale are numberleſs *ſinging* birds,
" every where fluttering about, whoſe warblings
" take the ear of paſſengers, and cheat the labours

[c] Botaniſts give it the name of *oriental bind weed*. It is ſaid to be a very rambling plant, which climbs up trees, and riſes to a great height in the Levant, where it particularly flouriſhes.

" of

" of their way through it. On the banks of the " *Peneus*, on either ſide, are diſperſed irregularly, " thoſe *reſting places*, before ſpoken of; while the " river itſelf glides through the middle of the " lawn, with a ſoft and quiet lapſe; over-hung " with the ſhades of trees, planted on its borders, " whoſe intermingled branches keep off the rays " of the ſun, and furniſh the opportunity of a " cool and temperate navigation upon it. The " worſhip of the gods, and the perpetual fra- " grancy of ſacrifices and burning odours, further " conſecrate the place, &c." [*Var. Hiſt.* lib. III. c. i.]

Now this picture, which Ælian took from nature, and which any one, if he hath not ſeen the ſeveral parts of it ſubſiſting together, may eaſily compound for himſelf out of that ſtock of rural images, which are repoſited in the memory, is, in fact, the ſubſtance of all thoſe luſcious and luxuriant paintings, which poetry hath ever been able to *feign*. For what more is there in the *Elyſiums*, the *Arcadias*, the *Edens* of antient and modern fame? And the common *object* of all theſe pictures being continually preſent to the eye, what way is there of avoiding the moſt exact agreement of repreſentation in them? Or how from any *ſimilarity* in the materials, of which they are formed, ſhall we infer an *imitation?*

This agreeable ſcenery is, for an obvious reaſon, the moſt frequent object of deſcription. Though ſometimes it chuſes to itſelf a dark and ſombrous imagery; which nature, again, holds out to imitation, or fancy, which hath a wondrous quickneſs and facility in oppoſing its ideas, readily ſuggeſts. We have an inſtance in the picture of that *horrid and deteſted vale*, which Tamora deſcribes in TITUS ANDRONICUS. It is

a perfect contraſt to Ælian's, and may be called an *Anti-tempe*. Or, to ſee this oppoſition of images in the ſtrongeſt light, the reader may turn to *L'Allegro* and *Il Penſeroſo* of Milton; where he hath artfully made, throughout the two poems, the ſame kind of ſubjects excite the two paſſions of *mirth* and *melancholy*.

When the reader is got into this train, he will eaſily extend the ſame obſervation to other inſtances of *natural deſcription*; and can hardly avoid, after a few trials, coming to this ſhort concluſion, that "of all the various delineations in the poets, "of the HEAVENS, in their viciſſitude of times "and ſeaſons; of the EARTH, in its diverſity of "*mountains*, *valleys*, *promontories*, &c. of the SEA, "under its ſeveral aſpects of *turbulence*, or *ſere-* "*nity*; of the *make* and *ſtructure* of ANIMALS, "&c." it can rarely be affirmed, that they are "*copies* of one another, but rather the genuine "products of the ſame creating fancy, operating "uniformly in them all." If there be reaſon for ſuſpecting any communication between different writers, it muſt be taken from ſomething elſe, beſides the identity of the *ſubject-matter* of ſuch deſcriptions; as from the *number* or *nature* of the circumſtances, ſelected for imitation; from the *order*, in which they are diſpoſed; or the *manner*, in which they are expreſſed.

My purpoſe in this eſſay, which is to make appear the difficulty of detecting *imitations*, not to ſhew the method of aſcertaining *originals*, does not require me to enlarge on theſe topics. Yet the *laſt* is a matter of ſo much curioſity, that I am tempted to ſay a word to it. For, though the *ſubject* of deſcription be ever, unvariably the ſame, and different poets may, or rather muſt, agree in the

the ſame *general* conceptions of it, yet is there enough left to the operation of true genius, to diſtinguiſh the touch of a maſter, from the faint and lifeleſs drawing of a bad poet. And this lies in what I call the *manner of expreſſion*; by which is not meant the *language* of the poet, but ſimply his *deſign*, or the form, under which he chuſes to preſent his imagery to the imagination. I ſhall be underſtood from the following inſtance.

Deſcriptions of the *morning* are very frequent in the poets. But this appearance is known by ſo many attending circumſtances, that there will be room for a conſiderable variety in the pictures of it. It may be deſcribed by thoſe *ſtains of light*, which ſtreak and diverſify the clouds; by the peculiar *colour of the dawn*; by its *irradiations* on the *ſea*, or *earth*; on ſome peculiar objects, as *trees*, *hills*, *rivers*, &c. A difference alſo will ariſe from the *ſituation*, in which we ſuppoſe ourſelves; if on the *ſea ſhore*, this *harbinger of day* will ſeem to break forth from the *ocean*; if on the *land*, from the extremity of a large plain, terminated, it may be, by ſome remarkable object, as a *grove*, *mountain*, &c. There are perhaps many other *differences*, of which the ſame preciſe *number* will ſcarcely offer itſelf to two poets; or not the *ſame individual* circumſtances; or not *diſpoſed* in the ſame manner. But let the ſame identical circumſtance, ſuppoſe the *breakiug or firſt appearance of the dawn*, be taken by different writers, and we may ſtill expect a conſiderable diverſity in their *repreſentation* of it. What we may allow to all poets, is that they will *imperſonate* the morning. And though this idea of it is *metaphorical*, and ſo belongs to another place, as reſpecting the *manner* of imitation only; yet, when once conſidered

under this *figure*, the *drawing* of it comes as directly within the province of *deſcription*, as the real, *literal* circumſtances themſelves. Now in deſcriptions of the morning under this idea of a *perſon*, the very ſame *attitude*, which is made analogous to the *circumſtance*, before ſpecified, and is to ſuggeſt it, will, as I ſaid, be repreſented by different writers very differently. *Homer*, to expreſs *the riſe or appearance of this perſon*, ſpeaks of her *as ſhooting forth from the ocean:*

——————ΑΠ ΩΚΕΑΝΟΙΟ ΡΟΑΩΝ
ΩΡΝΥΘ.

Virgil, as riſing from the rocks of Ida.

Jamque jugis ſummæ ſurgebat Lucifer Idæ,
Ducebatq; diem.

Shakeſpear hath cloſed a fine deſcription of the morning with the ſame *image*, but expreſſed in a very different manner.

——*Look what ſtreaks*
Do lace the ſevering clouds in yonder eaſt:
Night's candles are put out: and JOCUND DAY
STANDS TIPTOE ON THE MISTY MOUNTAINS TOP.

The reader of true taſte pronounces, I dare ſay, on firſt ſight, this deſcription to be *original*. But why? There is no part of it, which may not be traced in other poets. The *ſtaining of the clouds*, and *putting out the ſtars* are circumſtances, that are almoſt conſtantly taken notice of in repreſentations of the morning. And the laſt *image*, which ſtrikes moſt, is not eſſentially different from that of Virgil and Homer. It would expreſs the *attitude* of a perſon impatient, and in act to make his appearance. And this is, plainly, the *image* ſuggeſted by the other two. But the difference lies

lies here. Homer's *expreſſion* of this *impatience* is *general*, ΩΡΝΤΘ. So is Virgil's, and, as the occaſion required, with leſs energy, SURGEBAT. Shakeſpear's is *particular:* that impatience is ſet before us, and pictured to the eye in the circumſtance of *ſtanding tiptoe*; the attitude of a winged meſſenger, in act to ſhoot away on his errand with eagerneſs and precipitation. Which is a beauty of the ſame kind with that Ariſtotle ſo much admired in the ΡΟΔΟΔΑΚΤΥΛΟΣ of Homer. "This image, ſays he, is "peculiar and "ſingularly proper to ſet the object before our "eyes. Had the poet ſaid ΦΟΙΝΟΚΟΔΑΚΤΥΛΟΣ, "the colour had been ſignified too *generally*, and "ſtill worſe by ΕΡΥΘΡΟΔΑΚΤΥΛΟΣ. ΡΟΔΟΔΑΚ-"ΤΥΛΟΣ gives the preciſe idea, which was want-"ing[d]."

This, it muſt be owned, is one of the ſureſt characteriſtics of real genius. And if we find it generally in a writer, we may almoſt venture to eſteem him *original* without further ſcruple. For the ſhapes and appearances of things are apprehended, only in the groſs, by dull minds. They think they *ſee*, but it is as through a miſt, where if they catch but a faint glimpſe of the form before them, it is well. More one is not to look for from their clouded imaginations. And what they thus imperfectly diſcern, it is not poſſible for them to delineate very diſtinctly. Whereas every object ſtands forth in bright ſun-ſhine to the view of the true poet. Every minute mark and lineament of the contemplated form leaves a correſponding trace on his fancy. And having theſe bright and determinate conceptions of things in his own mind,

[d] ARIST. RHET. lib. iii. c. xi.

he

he finds it no difficulty to convey the livelieſt ideas of them to others. This is what we call *painting* in poetry; by which not only the general natures of things are deſcribed, and their appearances ſhadowed forth; but every ſingle *property* marked, and the poet's own image ſet in diſtinct *relief* before the view of his reader.

If this glow of imagery, reſulting from clear and bright perceptions in the poet be not a certain character of *genius*, it will be difficult, I believe, to ſay what is: I mean ſo far as deſcriptive poetry, which we are now conſidering, is concerned. The ſame *general* appearances muſt be copied by all poets; the ſame *particular* circumſtances will frequently occur to all. But to give life and colour to the ſelected circumſtance, and imprint it on the imagination with diſtinctneſs and vivacity, this is the proper office of true genius. An ordinary writer may, by dint of induſtry, and a careful ſtudy of the beſt models, ſometimes ſucceed in this work of *painting*; that is, having ſtolen a ray from heaven, he may now and then direct it ſo happily, as to animate and enkindle his own lumpiſh matter; but to ſucceed conſtantly in this art of deſcription, to be able, on all occaſions, to exhibit what the Greek Rhetoricians call ΦΑΝΤΑΣΙΑΝ; which is, as Longinus well expreſſes it, when "the poet, "from his own vivid and enthuſiaſtic conception "ſeems to have the object, he deſcribes, in actual "view, and preſents it, almoſt, to the eyes of the "reader[e]," this can be accompliſhed by nothing leſs, than the genuine plaſtic powers of original *invention*.

[e] Ὅταν ἃ λέγῃς, ὑπ' ἐνθουσιασμοῦ καὶ πάθους δόξῃς βλέπειν καὶ ὑπ' ὄψιν τιθῇς τοῖς ἀκούσιν. [ΠΕΡ. ΥΨ. § XV.]

2. If

2. If from this vaſt theatre of *ſenſible and extraneous* beauty, the poet turn his attention to what paſſes *within*, he immediately diſcovers a new world, inviſible indeed and intellectual; but which is equally capable of being repreſented to the view of others. This ariſes from that *ſimilarity of mind*, if I may ſo ſpeak, which, like that of outward *form* and *make*, by the wiſe proviſion of nature, runs through the whole ſpecies. We are all furniſhed with the ſame original *properties and affections*, as with the ſame ſtock of *perceptions and ideas*; whence it is, that our own intimate conſciouſneſs of what we carry about in ourſelves, becomes, as it were, the interpreter of the poet's thought; and makes us readily enter into all his deſcriptions of the human nature. Theſe deſcriptions are of two kinds; either 1. ſuch as expreſs that tumult and diſorder of the mind, which we feel in ourſelves from the diſturbance of any natural affection: or, 2. that more quiet ſtate, which gives birth to calmer ſentiments and reflexions. The *former* diviſion takes in all the workings of PASSION. The *latter*, comprehends our MANNERS and SENTIMENTS. Both are equally the objects of poetry; and of poetry only, which triumphs without a rival, in this moſt ſublime and intereſting of the works of *imitation*. Painting, we know, can expreſs the *material univerſe*; and, as will be ſeen hereafter, can evidence the internal movements of the ſoul by *ſenſible marks and ſymbols*; but it is poetry alone, which delineates the mind itſelf, and opens the receſſes of the heart to us.

EFFERT ANIMI MOTUS INTERPRETE LINGUA.

Now the poet, as I ſaid, in addreſſing himſelf to this province of his art, hath only to conſult

with his own conſcious reflexion. Whatever be the ſituation of the perſons, whom he would make known to us, let him but take counſel of his own heart, and it will very faithfully ſuggeſt the fitteſt and moſt natural expreſſions of their character. No man can deſcribe of others further than he hath *felt* himſelf. And what he hath thus known from his own *feeling* is ſo conſonant to the experience of all others, that his deſcription muſt needs be *true*; that is, be the very ſame, which a careful attention to ſuch experience muſt have dictated to every other. So that, inſtead of aſking one's ſelf (as an admired antient adviſed to do) on any attempt to excel in compoſition "how this or that "celebrated author would have written on the "occaſion;" the ſurer way, perhaps, is to inquire of ourſelves "how we have *felt* or *thought* in ſuch "a conjuncture, what *ſenſations* or *reflexions* the "like circumſtances have actually excited in us." For the anſwer to theſe queries will undoubtedly ſet us in the direct road of nature and common ſenſe. And, whatever is thus taken from the *life*, will, we may be ſure, affect other minds, in proportion to the vigour of our conception and expreſſion of it. In ſum,

To catch the manners living, as they riſe,

I mean, from our own internal frame and conſtitution, is the ſole way of writing naturally and juſtly of human life. And every ſuch deſcription of *ourſelves* (the great exemplar of *moral imitation*) will be as unavoidably ſimilar to any deſcription copied on the like occaſion, by other poets; as pictures of the *natural world* by different hands, are, and muſt be, to each other, as being all derived

rived from the archetype of one common original.

1. Let us take ſome maſterpiece of a great poet, moſt famed for his original invention, in which he has ſucceſsfully revealed the ſecret internal workings of any PASSION. What does he make known of theſe myſterious powers, but what he *feels?* And whence comes the impreſſion, his deſcription makes on others, but from its agreement to their *feelings*[f]*?* To inſtance, in the expreſſion of *grief on the murder of children, relations, friends, &c.* a *paſſion*, which poetry hath ever taken a fond pleaſure to paint in all its diſtreſſes, and which our common nature obliges all readers to enter into with an exquiſite ſenſibility. What are the tender touches, which moſt affect us on theſe occaſions? Are they not ſuch, as theſe: *complaints of untimely death: of unnatural cruelty in the murderer: imprecation of vengeance: wearineſs and contempt of life: expoſtulations with heaven: fond recollections of the virtues and good qualities of the deceaſed; and of the different expectations, raiſed by them?* Theſe were the dictates of nature to the *father of poets*, when he had to draw the diſtreſſes of *Priam's* family, ſorrowing for the death of Hector. Yet nothing, it ſeems, but *ſervile imitation* could ſupply his ſons, the Greek and Roman poets in after-times, with ſuch pathetic lamentations. It may be ſo. They were all nouriſhed by his ſtreams. But what ſhall we ſay of one, who aſſuredly never drank at his fountains?

—My heart will burſt, and if I ſpeak—
And I will ſpeak, that ſo my heart may burſt.

[f] So the great philoſopher ὁ γὰρ περὶ ἑνὸς συμβαίνει πάθος ψυχὰς ἰσχυρὰς, τοῦτο ἐν πᾶσαις ὑπάρχει· τῷ δὲ ἥττον διαφέρει, καὶ τῷ μᾶλλον. ΠΟΛΙΤ. Θ.

Butchers

Butchers and villains, bloody cannibals,
How ſweet a plant have ye untimely cropt!
You have no children; butchers, if you had,
The thought of them would have ſtirr'd up remorſe.

The reader, alſo, may conſult that wonderful ſcene, in which MACDUFF laments the murder of his wife and children. [MACBETH.]

2. It is not different with the MANNERS; I mean thoſe ſentiments, which mark and diſtinguiſh *characters*. Theſe reſult immediately from the ſuggeſtions of *nature*; which is ſo uniform in her workings, and offers herſelf ſo openly to common inſpection, that nothing but a perverſe and ſtudied affectation can frequently hinder the exacteſt ſimilarity of repreſentation in different writers. This is ſo true, that, from knowing the *general character*, intended to be kept up, we can gueſs, beforehand, how a perſon will act, or what ſentiments he will entertain, on any occaſion. And the critic even ventures to preſcribe, by the authority of rule, the particular properties and attributes, required to ſuſtain it. And no wonder. Every man, as he is conſcious to all *paſſions*, ſo is he, in ſome degree, the epitome of all *characters*. Nature may have inclined him moſt powerfully to one ſet of *manners*; juſt as one *paſſion* is, always, predominant in him. But he finds in himſelf the ſeeds of all others. This conſciouſneſs, as before, furniſhes the characteriſtic ſentiments, which conſtitute the *manners*. And it were full as ſtrange for two poets, who had taken in hand ſuch a character, as that of Achilles, to differ materially in their expreſſion of it; as for two painters, drawing from the ſame object, to avoid a ſtriking conſor-

conformity in the *deſign* and attitude of their pictures[g].

Thoſe who are fond of hunting after parallels, might, I doubt not, with great eaſe, confront almoſt every ſentiment, which, in the Greek tragedians, is made expreſſive of particular *characters*, with ſimilar paſſages in other poets; more eſpecially (for I muſt often refer to his authority) in the various living pourtraitures of *Shakeſpeare*. Yet he, who after taking this learned pains, ſhould chuſe to urge ſuch parallels, when found, for proofs of his *imitation of the ancients*, would only run the hazard of being reputed, by men of ſenſe, as poor a critic of human nature, as of his author.

Thus far indeed, the caſe is almoſt too plain to be diſputed. Strong *affections*, and conſtitutional *characters* will be allowed to act powerfully and ſteadily upon us. The violence and rapidity of their movements render all diſguiſe impoſſible. And we find ourſelves determined, by a kind of

[g] A great maſter in this ſubject, and who, if any, was likely to have made diſcoveries in the *interior* of human nature, declares roundly his opinion. "Tout eſt dit; & l'on vient trop "tard depuis plus de ſept mille ans qu'il y a des hommes, & "qui penſent. Sur ce qui concerne les MOEURS, le plus beau "& le meilleur eſt enlevé; l'on ne fait que glaner après les an-"ciens, & les habiles d'entre les modernes." [M. DE LA BRUYERE, *Tom.* i. p. 91. *Amſt.* 1701.] This, as the ingenious writer inſinuates, is an *inconvenience* to modern authors, who, with an equal right of property in theſe *common* ſentiments, will be thought to have borrowed them from their predeceſſors. Nay, it was an inconvenience to the ancients themſelves. One of them, in particular, was ſo ſenſible of it, that, in a fit of ill-humour, occaſioned, as we may ſuppoſe, by this unfair treatment of himſelf, he turns his complaint againſt thoſe very *predeceſſors*; whom he even execrates for having uſurped, what he calls, *the property of his thoughts before his time*. PEREANT QUI ANTE NOS NOSTRA DIXERUNT. The ſtory is told by ST. JEROM of his maſter DONATUS.

neceſ-

neceſſity, to *think and ſpeak*, in given circumſtances, after much the ſame manner. But what ſhall we ſay of our cooler reaſonings; the *ſentiments*, which the mind, at pleaſure, revolves, and applies, as it ſees fit, to various occaſions? "Fancy "and humour, it will be thought, have ſo great "an influence in directing theſe operations of our "mental faculties, as to make it altogether incre-"dible, that any remarkable coincidence of ſenti-"ment, in different perſons, ſhould reſult from "them."

To think of reducing the thoughts of man, which are "*more than the ſands, and wider than* "*the ocean*," into claſſes, were, perhaps, a wild attempt. Yet the moſt conſiderable of thoſe, which enter into works of poetry (beſides ſuch as reſult from fixed *characters* or predominant *paſſions*) may be included in the diviſion of 1. *Religious.* 2. *Moral.* And 3. *OEconomical* ſentiments; underſtanding by this *laſt* (for I know of no fitter term to expreſs my meaning) all thoſe *reaſonings*, which take their riſe from *particular conjunctures of ordinary life, and are any way relative to our conduct in it.*

1. The apprehenſion of ſome inviſible power, as ſuperintending the univerſe, though not *connate* with the mind, yet, from the experience of all ages, is found eſſential to the firſt and rudeſt exertions of its powers. And the ſeveral reflexions, which religion derives from this *idea*, are altogether as neceſſary. They run ſo directly from this ſource, that a man muſt do violence to common ſenſe to think it needful to account for them from any other. It is eaſy to conceive, how unavoidably, almoſt, the mind awakened by certain conjunctures of *diſtreſs*, and working on the ground of this

this original *impreſſion*, turns itſelf to awful views of deity, and ſeeks relief in thoſe ſoothing contemplations of providence, which we find ſo frequent in the *epic* and *tragic* poets. And whoever ſhall give himſelf the trouble of examining thoſe noble *hymns*, which the *lyric* muſe, in her graveſt humours, chaunted to the popular gods of paganiſm, will hardly find a ſingle trace of a devotional ſentiment, which hath not been common, at all times, to all *religioniſts*. Their *power*, and ſovereign *diſpoſal of all events*; their *care of the good*, and *averſion to the wicked*; the bleſſings, they derive on their *worſhipers*, and the terrors, they infix in the breaſts of the *profane*; theſe are the uſual topics of their meditations; the ſolemn ſentiments, that conſecrate theſe addreſſes to their local, gentilitial deities. In liſtening to theſe divine ſtrains every one *feels*, from his own conſciouſneſs, how neceſſary ſuch reflexions are to human nature; more particularly, when to the ſimple apprehenſion of *deity*, a warm *fancy* and ſtrong *affections* join their combined powers, to puſh the mind forward into enthuſiaſtic raptures. All the faculties of the ſoul being then upon the ſtretch, natural ability holds the place and, in ſome ſort, doth the office, of divine ſuggeſtion. And, bating the impure mixture of their fond and ſenſeleſs *traditions*, one is not ſurprized to find a ſtrong reſemblance, oftentimes, in point of *ſentiment*, betwixt theſe pagan odes, and the genuine inſpirations of heaven. Let not the reader be ſcandalized at this bold compariſon. It affirms no more, than what the graveſt authors have frequently ſhewn, a manifeſt analogy between the ſacred and prophane poets; and which ſuppoſes only, that heaven, when it infuſes its own light into the breaſts of men, doth not extin-

guiſh *that*, which nature and reaſon had before kindled up in them. It follows, that either *ſucceeding* poets are not neceſſarily to be accuſed of ſtealing their religious ſentiments from their elder brethren, or that ORPHEUS, HOMER, and CALLIMACHUS may be as reaſonably charged with plundering the ſacred treaſures of DAVID, and the other Hebrew prophets.

It is much the ſame with the *illuſions* of *corrupt* religion. The *fawns and nymphs* of the ancients, holding their reſidence in ſhadowy groves or caverns, and the frightful ſpectres of their *Larvæ*: to which we may oppoſe the modern viſions of *fairies*; and of *ghoſts*, gliding through churchyards, and haunting ſepulchres; together with the vaſt train of gloomy reflexions, which ſo naturally wait upon them, are, as well as the juſter notions of divinity, the genuine offspring of the ſame *common apprehenſions*. Reaſon, when miſled by ſuperſtition, takes a *certain route*, and keeps as ſteadily in it, as when conducted by a ſound and ſober piety. There needs only a previous conception of unſeen *intelligence* for the ground-work; and the timidity of human nature, amidſt the nameleſs terrors, which are every where preſenting themſelves to the ſuſpicious eye of ignorance, eaſily builds upon it the entire fabric of ſuperſtitious thinking. With the poets all this goes under the common name of RELIGION. For they are concerned only to repreſent the opinions and concluſions, to which the *Idea* of divinity leads. And theſe, we now ſee, they derive from their own *experience*, or the received *theology* of the times, of which they write. *Religious ſentiments* being, then, univerſally, either the obvious deductions of human reaſon, in the eaſieſt exerciſe of its powers, or

or the plain matter of ſimple obſervation, regarding what paſſes before us in real life, how can they but be the *ſame* in different writers, though perfectly *original*, and holding no correſpondence with each other?

2. And the ſame is true of our *moral*, as *religious* ſentiments. Whole volumes, indeed, have been written to ſhew, that all our commoneſt notices of *right* and *wrong* have been traduced from antient tradition, founded on expreſs ſupernatural communication. With writers of this turn the *gnomæ* of paganiſm, even the ſlighteſt moral ſentiments of the moſt original antients, ſpring from this ſource. If any exception were allowed, one ſhould ſuppoſe it would be in favour of the *father of poetry*, whoſe writings all have agreed to ſet up as the very prodigy of human invention. And yet a very learned profeſſor, (to paſs over many ſlighter Eſſays) hath compiled a large work of Homer's moral *paralleliſms*; that is, ethic ſentences, confronted with ſimilar ones out of ſacred writ. The correſpondency it ſeems, appeared ſo ſtriking to this learned perſon, that he was in doubt, if this great original thinker had not drawn from the fountains of *Siloam*, inſtead of *Caſtalis*. Whereas the whole, which theſe ſtudied collections prove to plain ſenſe, perverted by no bias of falſe zeal or religious prepoſſeſſion, is, that reaſon, or provident nature, has inſcribed the ſame legible characters of *moral* truth on all minds; and that the beauties of the *moral*, as *natural* world lie open to the view of all obſervers. This, if it were not too plain, to need inſiſting upon, might be further ſhewn from the *ſimilarity*, which hath conſtantly been obſerved in the *law* and *moral* of all ſtates and countries; as well the uninformed, and far diſtant

regions of barbariſm, as thoſe happier climates, on which, from the neighbourhood of their ſituation, and the curioſity of inquiry, ſome beams of this celeſtial light may be thought to have glanced.

But, perhaps, I went too far in denying all commerce of Homer with the oracles of Judæa. At leaſt the conjecture of profeſſor DUPORT is a ſober folly in compariſon of the conceit of ſome, who, not content with charging a theft of *morals* on the pagan poets, will needs have it, that they have pilfered their *hiſtory and mythology* from the bible. One GERARD CROESE, ſo late as the year 1704, publiſhed at *Dort* a book entitled, ΟΜΗΡΟΣ ΕΒΡΑΙΟΣ; the ſerious deſign of which was to ſhew, that the Iliad and Odyſſey were in reality, a recital of the ſacred hiſtory in verſe. And another writer goes ſtill further. M. FAYDIT, in a piece, which he calls, "*Remarques ſur Virgile & ſur Homere, & ſur le ſtyle de l'ecriture ſainte*," contends, that, with a very Promethean impiety, theſe two poets have ſtolen the appropriate fires of heaven; that is, have transferred the very *arcana* of our religion into their profane handy-work. Particularly, as to Virgil, he ſees the doctrine of the *Trinity* in "numero Deus impare gaudet;" and the wonders of the *crucifixion*, in the account of the prodigies, which followed the death of Julius Cæſar, recorded in the Georgics.

The dreams of theſe fantaſtic zealots provoke our contempt. Yet the folly is only more uſual, not, in itſelf, leſs extravagant, of deriving the plain moral ſentiments of writers from the ſame general ſource of revelation, or from one another. One common original, indeed, there is of moral information to mankind; but we need look no further for it, in what concerns the preſent ſubject, than the

the common reaſon of mankind; which, however it may be, ſometimes, obſcured by ignorance, or ſuperſtition, yet, in general, and eſpecially, in all civilized countries, which flouriſh in the arts of compoſition, muſt needs be clear enough, to point to the great eſſential rules of moral conduct, and ſufficiently explain the ground of that reſemblance in *moral thinking*, which we obſerve in different writers. Whence appears the utter impertinence, (ſo far as reſpects the caſe of *imitation*) of all that criticiſm, which is become the conſtant and cumbrous appendage of antient wit; I mean the practice of hanging on every claſſic the dead weight of *moral paralleliſms*; collected with vaſt pains from all antiquity; and diſplayed, with a nauſeous pageantry, as a monument of the collector's reading and erudition. In one view, indeed, theſe *ſtrings of pearls* have their uſe; it is in illuſtrating the ſimilarity of nature in all her workings, and informing us, not that the writer ſtole his ſentiments, but that he *thought* naturally. And further than this, I think, the true critic will not regard them.

3. For what concerns the claſs of *œconomical ſentiments*; or ſuch prudential concluſions, as offer themſelves on certain conjunctures of ordinary life, theſe, it is plain, depending very much on the free exerciſe of our reaſoning powers, will be more variable and uncertain, than any other. When the mind is at leiſure to caſt about and amuſe itſelf with reflexions, which no *characteriſtic quality* dictates, or *affection* extorts, and which ſpring from no preconceived ſyſtem of *moral or religious* opinions, a greater latitude of thinking is allowed; and conſequently any remarkable correſpondency of *ſentiment* affords more room for ſuſpicion of *imitation*. Yet, in any ſuppoſed combination of

circumſtances, one train of thought is, generally, moſt obvious, and occurs ſooneſt to the underſtanding; and, it being the office of poetry to preſent the moſt *natural* appearances, one cannot be much ſurprized to find a frequent coincidence of reflexion even here. The firſt page one opens in any writer will furniſh examples. The duke in *Meaſure for Meaſure*, upon hearing ſome petty ſlanders thrown out againſt himſelf, falls into this trite reflexion:

No might nor greatneſs in mortality
Can cenſure 'ſcape: back-wounding calumny
The whiteſt virtue ſtrikes.

Friar Lawrence, in *Romeo and Juliet*, obſerving the exceſſive raptures of Romeo on his marriage, gives way to a ſentiment, naturally ſuggeſted by this circumſtance:

Theſe violent delights have violent ends,
And in their triumph die.—

Now what is it, in prejudice to the originality of theſe places, to alledge a hundred or a thouſand paſſages (for ſo many it were, perhaps, not impoſſible to accumulate) analogous to them in the ancient or modern poets? Could any reaſonable critic miſtake theſe genuine workings of the mind for inſtances of *imitation?*

In *Cymbeline*, the obſequies of Imogen are celebrated with a ſong of triumph over the evils of human life, from which death delivers us:

Fear no more the heat o' th' ſun,
Nor the furious winter's rages, &c.

What a temptation this for the paralleliſt to ſhew his reading! yet his incomparable editor obſerves

ſerves ſlightly upon it: "This is the topic of "conſolation, that nature dictates to all men on "theſe occaſions. The ſame farewell we have "over the dead body in Lucian; ΤΕΚΝΟΝ ΑΘ-"ΑΙΟΝ, ΟΥΚΕΤΙ ΔΙΨΗΣΕΙΣ, ΟΥΚΕΤΙ ΠΕΙΝΗΣΕΙΣ, "&c."

When Valentine in the *Twelfth-night* reports the inconquerable grief of Olivia for the loſs of a brother, the duke obſerves upon it,

O! ſhe that hath a heart of that fine frame
To pay this debt of love but to a brother,
How will ſhe love, when the rich golden ſhaft
Hath killed the flock of all affections elſe
That live in her?

'Tis ſtrange, the critics have never diſcovered a ſimilar ſentiment to this in Terence, who makes Simo in the *Andrian* reaſon on his ſon's concern for Chryſis in the ſame manner:

Nonnunquam conlacrumabat: placuit tum id mihi.
Sic cogitabam: hic parvæ conſuetudinis
Cauſâ hujus mortem tam fert familiariter:
Quid ſi ipſe amâſſet? Quid mihi hic faciet patri?

It were eaſy to multiply examples, but I ſpare the reader. Though nothing may ſeem, at firſt ſight, more inconſtant, variable, and capricious, than the *thought* of man, yet he will eaſily collect, that *character*, *paſſion*, *ſyſtem*, or *circumſtance* can, each in its turn, by a ſecret yet ſure influence, bind its extravagant ſtarts and ſallies; and effect, at length, as neceſſary a conformity of repreſentation of theſe *internal movements*, as of the viſible phænomena of the *natural world*. A poor impoveriſhed ſpirit, who has no ſources of invention in himſelf, may be tempted to relieve his wants

at the expence of his wealthier neighbour. But the ſuſpicion of *real ability*, is childiſh. Common ſenſe directs us, for the moſt part, to regard *reſemblances* in great writers, not as the pilferings, or frugal acquiſitions of needy *art*, but as the honeſt fruits of genius, the free and liberal bounties of unenvying *nature*.

III. Having learned, from our own conſcious reflexion, the ſecret operations of *reaſon*, *character*, and *paſſion*, it now remains to contemplate their *effects in viſible appearances*. For nature is not more regular and conſiſtent with herſelf in touching the fine and hidden ſprings of humanity, than in ordering the outward and groſſer movements. The thoughts and affections of men paint themſelves on the *countenance*; ſtand forth in *airs* and *attitudes*; and declare themſelves in all the diverſities of human *action*. This is a new field for mimic genius to range in; a great and glorious one, and which affords the nobleſt and moſt intereſting objects of *imitation*. For the external forms themſelves are grateful to the *fancy*, and, as being expreſſive of *deſign*, warm and agitate the *heart* with paſſion. Hence it is, that narrative poetry, which draws mankind under every *apparent conſequence and effect* of paſſion, inchants the mind. And even the dramatic, we know, is cool and lifeleſs, and loſes half its efficacy, without *action*. This, too, is the province of *picture*, *ſtatuary*, and all arts, which inform by mute ſigns. Nay, the mute arts may be ſtyled, almoſt without a figure, in this claſs of *imitation*, the moſt eloquent. For what words can expreſs *airs and attitudes*, like the pencil? Or, when the genius of the artiſts is equal, who can doubt of giving the preference to that repreſentation, which, ſtriking on the

the ſight, grows almoſt into reality, and is hardly conſidered by the inraptured thought, as *fiction?* When *paſſion* is to be made known by outward *act*, Homer himſelf yields the palm to *Raphael.*

But our buſineſs is with the *poets.* And, in reviewing this their largeſt and moſt favoured ſtock of *materials*, can we do better than contemplate them in the very order, in which we before diſpoſed the *workings* of the mind itſelf, the *cauſes* of theſe appearances?

1. To begin with the *affections.* They have their riſe, as was obſerved, from the very *conſtitution* of human nature, when placed in given circumſtances, and acted upon by certain occaſions. The perceptions of theſe inward commotions are uniformly the ſame, in all; and draw along with them the ſame, or ſimilar *ſentiments and reflexions.* Hence the appeal is made to every one's own *conſciouſneſs*, which declares the truth or falſhood of the *imitation.* When theſe *commotions* are produced and made objective to ſenſe by *viſible ſigns*, is *obſervation* a more fallible guide, than *conſciouſneſs?* Or, doth experience atteſt theſe *ſigns* to be leſs ſimilar and uniform, than their *occaſions?* By no means. Take a man under the impreſſion of *joy*, *fear*, *grief*, or any other of the ſtronger affections, and ſee, if a peculiar conformation of feature, ſome certain ſtretch of muſcle, or contortion of limb, will not neceſſarily follow, as the clear and undoubted index of his condition. Our natural curioſity is ever awake and attentive to theſe *changes.* And poetry ſets herſelf at work, with eagerneſs, to catch and tranſcribe their various *appearances.* No correſpondency of repreſentation, then, needs ſurprize us; nor any the exacteſt *reſemblance* be thought ſtrange, where the *object* is equally

equally preſent to all perſons. For it muſt be remarked of the *viſible effects* of MIND, as, before, of the *phænomena* of the *material world*, that they are, ſimply, the objects of *obſervation*. So that what was concluded of *theſe*, will hold alſo of the *others*; with this difference, that the *effects of internal movements* do not preſent themſelves ſo *conſtantly* to the eye, nor with that *uniformity* of appearance, as *permanent*, *external exiſtencies*. We cannot ſurvey them, at *pleaſure*, but as occaſion offers: and we, further, find them diverſified by the *character*, or diſguiſed, in ſome degree, by the *artifice*, of the perſons, in whom we obſerve them. But all the conſequence is, that, to ſucceed in this work of painting the *ſignatures of internal affection*, requires a larger experience, or quicker penetration, than copying after *ſtill life*. Where the proper qualifications are poſſeſſed, and eſpecially in deſcribing the *marks* of vigorous affections, different writers cannot be ſuppoſed to vary more conſiderably, in *this* province of *imitation*, than in the *other*. Our trouble therefore, on this head, may ſeem to be at an end. Yet it will be expected, that ſo general a concluſion be inforced by ſome *illuſtrations*.

The paſſion of LOVE is one of thoſe affections, which bear great ſway in the human nature. Its *workings* are violent. And its *effects* on the perſon, poſſeſſed by it, and in the *train of events*, to which it gives occaſion, conſpicuous to all obſervers. The power of this commanding affection hath triumphed at all times. It hath given birth to ſome of the greateſt and moſt ſignal tranſactions in *hiſtory*; and hath furniſhed the moſt inchanting ſcenes of *fiction*. Poetry hath ever lived by it. The modern muſe hath hardly any exiſtence without

out it. Let us aſk, then, of this *tyrant paſſion*, whether its operations are not too familiar to *ſenſe*; its *effects* too viſible to the *eye*, to make it neceſſary for the poet to go beyond himſelf, and the ſphere of his own obſervation for the *original* of his deſcriptions of it.

To prevent all cavil, let it be allowed, that the *ſigns* of this paſſion, I mean, the viſible effects, in which it ſhews itſelf, are various and almoſt infinite. It is reproached, above all others, with the names of *capricious*, *fantaſtic*, *and unreaſonable*. No wonder then, if it aſſume an endleſs variety of forms, and ſeem impatient, as it were, of any certain ſhape or poſture. Yet this Proteus of a paſſion may be fixed by the magic hand of the poet. Though it can *occaſionally* take *all*, yet it delights to be ſeen in *ſome* ſhapes, more than others. Some of its *effects* are known and obvious, and are perpetually recurring to obſervation. And theſe are ever fitteſt to the ends of poetry; every man pronouncing of ſuch repreſentations, from his proper experience, that they are from *nature*. Nay its very irregularities may be reduced to rule. There is not, in antiquity, a truer picture of this fond and froward paſſion, than is given us in the perſon of Terence's *Phædria* from Menander. *Horace* and *Perſius*, when they ſet themſelves, on purpoſe, to expoſe and exaggerate its follies, could imagine nothing beyond it. Yet we have much the ſame inconſiſtent character in JULIA in two gentlemen of Verona.

Shall it be now ſaid, that *Shakeſpeare* copied from Terence, as Terence from Menander? Or is it not as plain to common ſenſe, that the Engliſh poet is *original*, as that the *Latin* poet was an *imitator?*

Shake-

Shakeſpeare, on another occaſion, deſcribes the various, external ſymptoms of this extravagant affection. Amongſt others, he inſiſts, there is no ſurer ſign of being in love, "*than when every* "*thing about you demonſtrates a careleſs deſolation.*" [*As you like it*. A. iii. Sc. 8.] Suppoſe now the poet to have taken in hand the ſtory of a neglected, abandoned lover; for inſtance of Ariadne; a ſtory, which antient poetry took a pleaſure to relate, and which hath been touched with infinite grace by the tender, paſſionate muſe of Catullus and Ovid. Suppoſe him to give a pourtrait of her *paſſion* in that diſtreſsful moment, when, "*from the naked* "*beach, ſhe views the parting ſail of Theſeus.*" This was a time for all the ſigns of *deſolation* to ſhew themſelves. And could we doubt of his deſcribing thoſe *very ſigns*, which nature's ſelf dictated, long ago, to Catullus?

Non flavo retinens ſubtilem vertice mitram,
Non contexta levi velatum pectus amictu,
Non tereti ſtrophio luctantes vincta papillas;
Omnia quæ toto delapſa è corpore paſſim
Ipſius ante pedes fluctus ſalis alludebant.

But there is a higher inſtance in view. The humanity and eaſy elegance of the two Latin poets, juſt mentioned, joined to an unaffected *naivetè* of expreſſion, were, perhaps, moſt proper to deſcribe the petulancies, the caprices, the ſoftneſſes of this paſſion in common life. To paint its tragic and more awful diſtreſſes, to melt the ſoul into all the ſympathies of ſorrow, is the peculiar character of Virgil's poetry. His talents were, indeed, univerſal. But I think we may give it for the characteriſtic of his muſe, that ſhe was, beyond all others, poſſeſſed of a ſovereign power of touching

touching the tender paſſions. Euripides' ſelf, whoſe genius was moſt reſembling to his, of all the ancients, holds, perhaps, but the ſecond place in this praiſe.

A poet, thus accompliſhed, would omit, we may be ſure, no occaſion of yielding to his natural bias of recording the diſtreſſes of *love*. He diſcovered his talent, as well as inclination very early, in the *Bucolics*; and even, where one ſhould leaſt expect it, in his *Georgics*. But the faireſt opportunity offered in his great deſign of the *Æneis*. Here one ſhould ſuppoſe, the whole bent of his genius would exert itſelf. And we are not diſappointed. I ſpeak not of that ſucceſſion of *ſentiments, reflexions, and expoſtulations*, which flow, as in a continued ſtream of grief, from the firſt diſcovery of her heart to her ſiſter, to her laſt frantic and inflamed reſentments. Theſe belong to the former article of *internal movements:* and need not be reconſidered. My concern, at preſent, is with thoſe *viſible, external indications*, the ſenſible marks and ſignatures (as expreſſed in *look*, *air*, and *action*) of this tormenting frenzy. The hiſtory of theſe, as related in the narrative part of Dido's adventure, would comprehend ev'ry natural *ſituation* of a perſon, under *love's* diſtractions. And it were no unpleaſing amuſement to follow and contemplate her, in a ſeries of pictures, from her firſt attitude, of *hanging on the mouth of Æneas*, through all the gradual exceſſes of her rage, to the concluding fatal *act of deſperation*. But they are deeply imprinted on every ſchoolboy's memory. It need only be obſerved, that they are ſuch, as almoſt neceſſarily ſpring up from the circumſtances of her caſe, and which every reader, on firſt view,

as

as agreeing to his own notices and obſervations, pronounces *natural.*

It may ſeem ſufficient, therefore, to aſcribe theſe pourtraitures of paſſion, ſo ſuitable to all our expectations, and in drawing which the genius of the great poet ſo eminently excelled, to the original hand and deſign of Virgil. But the perverſe humour of criticiſm, occaſioned by this inveterate prejudice "of taking all *reſemblances* for *thefts*," will allow no ſuch thing. Before it will decide of this matter, every ancient writer, who but incidentally touches a love-adventure, muſt be ſought out and brought in evidence againſt him. And finding, that *Homer* hath his Calypſo, and *Euripides* and *Apollonius* their Medea, it adjudges the entire epiſode to be ſtolen by piece-meal, and patched up out of their writings. I have a learned critic now before me, who roundly aſſerts, "that, "but for the Argonautics, there had been no "fourth book of the Æneis[h]." Some traits of reſemblance there are. It could not be otherwiſe. But all the uſe a candid reader, who comes to his author with the true ſpirit of a critic, will make of them, is to ſhew, "how juſtly the poet copies "nature, which had ſuggeſted ſimilar repreſenta-"tions to his predeceſſors."

What is here concluded of the *ſofter*, cannot but hold more ſtrongly of the *boiſterous* paſſions. Theſe do not ſhelter, and conceal themſelves within the man. It is, particularly, of their nature to ſtand forth, and ſhew themſelves in *outward action.* Of the more illuſtrious *effects* of the ruder paſſions the chief are *contentions and wars—regum & populorum æſtus*; which, by reaſon of the grandeur of

[h] JEREMIAS HOELSLINUS, *Prolegom. ad Apollon. Rhodium.*

the

the ſubject, and its important conſequences, ſo fitted to ſtrike the thought, and fire the affections of the reader, poetry, I mean the higheſt and ſublimeſt ſpecies of it, chuſes principally to deſcribe. In the conduct of ſuch *deſcription*, ſome difference will ariſe from the inſtruments in uſe for the annoyance of the enemy, and, in general, the ſtate of *art military*; but the actuating paſſions of *rage*, *ambition*, *emulation*, *thirſt of honour*, *revenge*, &c. are invariably the ſame, and are conſtantly evidenced by the ſame external marks or characters. The *ſhocks of armies*, *ſingle combats*; *the chances and ſingularities of either*; *wounds*, *deaths*, *ſtratagems*, and the other attendants on *battle*, which furniſh out the ſtate and magnificence of the epic muſe, are, all of them, *fixed*, *determinate objects*; which leave their impreſſions on the mind of the poet, in as diſtinct and uniform characters, as the great conſtituent parts of the material univerſe itſelf. He hath only to look abroad into *life and action* for the model of all ſuch repreſentations. On which account we can rarely be certain, that the *picture* is not from *nature*, though an exact reſemblance give to ſuperficial and unthinking obſervers the ſuſpicion of *art*.

The ſame reaſoning extends to all the *phænomena* of human life, which are the effects or conſequences of *ſtrong affections*, and which ſet mankind before us in *geſtures*, *looks*, or *actions*, declarative of the inward ſuggeſtions of the heart. It can ſeldom be affirmed with confidence, in ſuch caſes, on the ſcore of any ſimilarity, that one repreſentation *imitates* another; ſince an ordinary attention to the ſame common original ſufficiently accounts for both. The reader, if he ſees fit, will apply theſe remarks to the *battles*, *games*, *travels*, &c. of a great

great poet, the ſuppoſed ſterility of whoſe genius hath been charged with ſerving itſelf pretty freely of the copious, inexhauſted ſtores of Homer. In ſum;

Quicquid agunt homines, votum, timor, ira, voluptas, Gaudia, &c.

whatever be the *actuating paſſion*, it cannot but be thought unfair to ſuſpect the artiſt of *imitation*; where nothing more is pretended than a *reſemblance* in the draught of *ſimilar effects*, which is not poſſible to be avoided.

2. If this be comprehended, I ſhall need to ſay the leſs of the MANNERS; which are not leſs conſtant in their *effects*, than the PASSIONS. When the *character* of any perſon hath been ſignified, and his ſituation deſcribed, it is not wonderful, that twenty different writers ſhould hit on the ſame *attitudes*, or employ him in the ſame manner. When Mercury is ſent to command the departure of Ulyſſes from Calypſo, our previous acquaintance with the hero's character, makes us expect to find him in the preciſe *attitude*, given to him by the poet, "ſitting in ſolitude on the ſea-ſhore, and "caſting a wiſhful eye towards Ithaca." Or, when, in the Iliad, an embaſſy is diſpatched to treat with the reſentful and vindictive, but brave Achilles, nothing could be more obvious, than to draw the pupil of Chiron in his tent "ſoothing his angry "ſoul with his harp and ſinging

"*Th' immortal deeds of heroes and of kings.*"

It was the like attention to *nature*, which led Milton to diſpoſe of his fallen angels after the manner, deſcribed in the ſecond book of *Paradiſe loſt*.

To

To multiply inſtances, when every poet in every page is at hand to furniſh them, were egregious trifling. In all caſes of this ſort, the *known character*, in conjunction with the *circumſtances* of the perſon deſcribed, determines the particular *action* or *employment*, for the moſt part, ſo abſolutely, that it requires ſome induſtry to miſtake it. In ſaying which, I do not forget, what many have, perhaps, been ready to object to me long ſince, "that what "is *natural* is not therefore of neceſſity *obvious:* All "the amazing flights of Homer's or Shakeſpear's "fancy are found agreeable to nature, when contem-"plated by the capable reader; but who will ſay, that, "therefore, they muſt have preſented themſelves to "the generality of writers? The office of *judgment* is "one thing, and of *invention*, another."

Properly ſpeaking, what we call *invention* in poetry is, in reſpect of the *matter* of it, ſimply, *obſervation*. And it is in the arrangement, uſe, and application of his *materials*, not in the inveſtigation of them, that the exerciſe of the poet's genius principally conſiſts. In the caſe of immediate and direct *imagery*, which is the ſubject at preſent, nothing more is requiſite, than to paint truly, what nature preſents to the eye, or common ſenſe ſuggeſts to the mind of the writer. A vivacity of thought will, indeed, be neceſſary to run over the ſeveral circumſtances of any *appearance*, and a juſt diſcernment will be wanting, out of a number, to ſelect ſuch peculiar circumſtances, as are moſt adapted to ſtrike the imagination. It is not therefore pretended, that the ſame images *muſt* occur to all. Sluggiſh, unactive underſtandings, which ſeldom look abroad into living nature, or, when they do, have not curioſity or vigour enough to direct their attention to the nicer particularities of her beauties, will unavoidably overlook the commoneſt

pearances: Or, wanting that juſt perception of what is *beautiful*, which we call *taſte*, will as often miſtake in the *choice* of thoſe circumſtances, which they may have happened to contemplate. But quick, perceptive, intelligent minds (and of ſuch only I can be thought to ſpeak) will hardly fail of ſeeing nature in the ſame light, and of noting the ſame diſtinct features and proportions. The ſuperiority of Homer and Shakeſpear to other poets doth not lie in their diſcovery of *new ſentiments or images*, but in the forceable manner, in which their ſublime genius taught them to convey and impreſs *old ones*.

And to inforce what is here ſaid of the *familiarity* of this claſs of the poet's materials, one may, further, appeal to the caſe of the other *mimetic* arts, which have no aſſiſtance from *narration*. Certain *geſtures*, *looks*, or *attitudes* are ſo immediately declarative of the *internal actuating cauſes*, that, on the ſlighteſt view of the *picture* or *ſtatue*, we collect the real ſtate of the perſons repreſented. This *figure*, we ſay, ſtrongly expreſſes the paſſion of *grief*; *that*, of *anger*; *that*, of *joy*; and ſo of all the other affections. Or, again, when the peculiar *paſſion* is characterized, the general temper and diſpoſition, which we call the *manners*, is clearly diſcernible. There is a liberal and graceful air, which diſcovers a fine temperature of the affections, in *one*; a cloſe and ſullen aſpect, declaring a narrow contracted ſelfiſhneſs in *another*. In ſhort, there is ſcarcely any mark or feature of the human mind, any peculiarity of diſpoſition or *character*, which the artiſt does not ſet off and make appear at once, to the view, by ſome certain turn or *conformation* of the outward figure. Now this effect of his *art* would be impoſſible, were it not, that regular and conſtant obſervation hath found ſuch *external ſigns* conſociated

ſociated with the correſpondent *internal workings*. A *heaven overhung with clouds*; the *toſſing of waves*, and *intermingled flaſhes of lightning* are not ſurer indications of a *ſtorm*, than the *gloomy face*, *diſtorted limb*, and *indignant eye* are of the outrage of conflicting *paſſion*. The ſimpleſt ſpectator is capable of obſerving this. And the artiſt deceives himſelf, or would reflect a falſe honour on his art, who ſuſpects there is any myſtery in making ſuch diſcoveries. There is a ſtory, in the infancy of painting, directly to our purpoſe.

POLYGNOTUS, who was one of the principal reformers, or rather inventors of this art, as is ſeen from his being the *firſt*, who painted with more than *one* colour, acquired great reputation by two pieces, of which Pauſanias has left us a deſcription; the one of which had, for its ſubject, *the taking of Troy*; the other, *the deſcent of Ulyſſes into hell*. It appears from his account of theſe two pictures, that the painter's intention, in every principal figure, was expreſsly declared by a motto or inſcription, placed over it. An ingenious perſon, who comments this place in Pauſanias, is ſo taken with the convenience of interpreting the deſign of pictures in *words*, that he is for introducing this uſage, without more ceremony, into modern practice. But he did not conſider, that it had its reaſon, and excuſe only, in the rude beginnings of *painting*, when, as yet, experience had not ſufficiently informed the painter, how far the judgments of other perſons agreed to his own; or, whether what he eſteemed himſelf a juſt and fit expreſſion of the *manners*, had occurred, or was likely to occur eaſily, to the notice of others. That this was the whole of the caſe, is clear from the ſame practice being in uſe on the revival of the *art* in theſe parts

of Europe; painters continuing, for a long time, to put *written ſcrolls* in the mouths of their figures; and contriving, by this expedient, to make them tell their buſineſs to the ſpectator, who, they ſuppoſed, would not be well able to find it out of himſelf. A further acquaintance with human nature, and the uniformity of its *workings*, brought the uſe of ſo impertinent a piece of intelligence into neglect. It was preſently diſcovered, as the *art* advanced and pictures multiplied, that every one was ſufficiently qualified to interpret for himſelf; and that, as nature was conſtant in evidencing her internal operations by *viſible ſigns*, the obſervation of thoſe ſigns, which force themſelves upon us in the commerce of ordinary life, muſt needs, in its turn, lead to a certain, and clear knowledge of her internal operations. And thus it happened, that *picture*, even without its prompters of written ſcrolls, was ſoon regarded as a kind of *mute poem*; that is, though it wanted the uſe of words, it had almoſt all the clearneſs and even eloquence of *narration* itſelf.

Nay, there is one advantage clearly on the ſide of *painting*, which it ſeems of moment to obſerve, before I leave this ſubject. *Poetry*, indeed, repreſents the *ſame* objects, the *ſame* ſenſible marks of the internal movements, as *picture*, but then it doth it with leſs *particularity and exactneſs*. My meaning will be underſtood in reflecting, that *words* can only give us, even when moſt expreſſive, the *general* image. The pencil touches its ſmalleſt and minuteſt *ſpecialities*. Hence any remarkable correſpondency of *air*, *feature*, *attitude*, &c. in two pictures, will, commonly and with good reaſon, convict one or both of them of *imitation*. For the odds are prodigious againſt ſuch exactneſs

neſs of ſimilitude, when the ſlighteſt trace of the pencil forms a ſenſible difference. But poets, who do not convey ideas with the ſame preciſion and diſtinctneſs, cannot be juſtly liable to this imputation, even where the general image repreſented happens to be the ſame. Virgil, one would think, on a very affecting occaſion, might have given the following repreſentation of his hero,

Multa gemens largoque humectat flumine vultum.

without any ſuſpicion of communicating with Homer, who had ſaid, in like manner, of his,

Ἴσατο δακρυχέων, ὥςε κρήνη μελάνυδρος.

But had two painters, in preſenting this image, agreed in the ſame particularities of *poſture*, *inclination of the head*, *air of the face*, &c. no one could doubt a moment, that the one was ſtolen from the other. Which ſingle obſervation, if attended to, will greatly abate the prejudice, uſually entertained on this ſubject. We think it incredible, amidſt the infinite diverſity of the poet's materials, that any two ſhould accord in the choice of the very *ſame*; more eſpecially when deſcribed with the ſame *circumſtances*. But we forget, that the ſame materials are left in common to *all* poets, and that the very *circumſtances*, alledged, can be, in *words*, but very generally and imperfectly delineated.

3. Of the *calmer ſentiments*, which come within the province of poetry, and, breaking forth into outward act, furniſh matter to deſcription, the moſt remarkable in their operations are thoſe of *religion*. It is certain, that the principal of thoſe rites and ceremonies, of thoſe outward acts of homage, which have prevailed in different ages and countries, and conſtituted the *public religion* of

mankind, had their riſe in our common nature, and were the genuine product of the workings of the human mind[i]. For it is the mere illuſion of this inveterate error concerning *imitation*, in general, which hath miſled ſome great names to imagine them traductive from each other. But the occaſion does not require us to take the matter ſo deep. The office of poetry in deſcribing the ſolemnity of her religious ritual is to look no farther, than the eſtabliſhed modes of the age and country, whoſe manners it would repreſent. If theſe ſhould be the ſame at different times in two religions, or the religion itſelf continue unchanged, it neceſſarily follows, that the repreſentations of them by different writers will agree to the minuteſt reſemblance. Not only the general *rite* or *ceremony* will be the ſame; but the very peculiarities of its performance, which are preſcribed by rule, remain unaltered. Thus, if *religious ſentiments* uſually expreſs themſelves, in *all* men, by a certain *poſture of the body*, *direction of the hands*, *turn of the countenance*, &c. theſe *ſigns* are uniformly and faithfully pictured in all devotional pourtraits. So, again, if by the genius of any *particular* religion, to which the poet is carefully to adhere, the practice of *ſacrifices*, *auguries*, *omens*, *luſtrations*, &c. be required in its eſtabliſhed ceremonial, the draught of this diverſity of *ſuperſtitions*, and of their minuteſt particulars, will have a neceſſary place in any work, profeſſing to delineate ſuch religion; whatever reſemblance its deſcriptions may be foreſeen to have to thoſe of any other.

The reader will proceed to apply theſe remarks, where he ſees fit. For it may ſcarcely ſeem worth

[i] Div. Leg. vol. ii. par. i. p. 355. ed. 1741.

while

while to take notice of the inſinuation, which a polite writer, but no very able critic, hath thrown out againſt the entire uſe of *religious deſcription* in poetry. I ſay the *entire uſe*; for ſo I underſtand him, when he ſays, "the *religion* of the gentiles "had been woven into the contexture of all the "antient poetry with a very *agreeable* mixture, "which made the moderns *affect* to give that of "Chriſtianity a place alſo in their poems[k]." He ſeems not to have conceived, that the *viſible effects* of religious opinions and diſpoſitions, conſtitute a principal part of what is moſt ſtriking in the ſublimer poetry. The *narrative ſpecies* delights in or rather cannot ſubſiſt without, theſe ſolemn pictures of the religious ritual; and the theatre is never more moved, than when its awful ſcenery is exhibited in the *dramatic*. Or, if he meant this cenſure, of the *intervention of ſuperior agents*, and what we call *machinery*, the obſervation (though it be ſeconded by one, whoſe profeſſion ſhould have taught him much better [l]) is not more to the purpoſe. For the pomp of the *epic muſe* demands to be furniſhed with a train of theſe celeſtial perſonages. Intending, as ſhe doth, to aſtoniſh the imagination with whatever is moſt auguſt within the compaſs of human thought, it is not poſſible for her to accompliſh this great end, but by the miniſtry of ſupernatural intelligencies, PER AMBAGES ET MINISTERIA DEORUM.

[k] Sir WILLIAM TEMPLE's *Works*, vol. i. p. 245 ed. 1740. fol.

[l] "*La machine du merveilleux, l'intervention d'un pouvoir* "*céleſte*, la nature des epiſodes, tout ce qui *depend de la tyrannie* "*de la coutume*, & de cet inſtinct qui on nomme goût; voilà "ſur quoi il y a mille opinions, & *point de régles générales*." M. DE VOLTAIRE, *Eſſai ſur la poëſie Epique*, chap. i.

Or, the proof of theſe two points may be given more preciſely thus: "The relation of man to the "deity, being as eſſential to his nature, as that "which he bears to his fellow-citizens, *religion* "becomes as neceſſary a part of a ſerious and "ſublime narration of human life, as *civil actions*. "And as the ſublime nature of it requires even "*virtues and vices* to be perſonified, much more "is it neceſſary, that *ſupernatural agency* ſhould "bear a part in it. For, whatever ſome *ſects* may "think of religion's being a divine philoſophy in "the mind, the *poet* muſt exhibit man's addreſſes "to heaven in *ceremonies*, and heaven's interven-"tion by *viſible agency*."

So that the intermixture of religion, in every point of view, is not only *agreeable*, but neceſſary to the very genius of, at leaſt, the higheſt claſs of poetry. Antients and moderns might therefore be led to the diſplay of this *ſacred ſcenery*, without *affectation*. And for what concerns *Chriſtian poets*, in particular, we ſee from an inſtance at home (whatever may be the ſucceſs of ſome Italians, whom he appears to have had in his eye) that, where the ſubject is proper to receive it, it can appear with as much *grace*, as in the *poets of paganiſm*. It may be concluded then, univerſally, that *religion* is the proper object of poetry, which wants no prompter of a preceding model to give it an introduction; and that the *forms*, under which it preſents itſelf, are too manifeſt and glaring to obſervation, to eſcape any writer.

The caſe is ſomewhat different with what I call the *moral and œconomical ſentiments*. Theſe operate indeed *within*, and by their buſy and active powers adminiſter abundant matter to poetic deſcription, which *alone* is equal to theſe *unſeen workings*.

ings. For their actings on the body are too feeble to produce any viſible alteration of the outward form. Their fine and delicate movements are to be apprehended only and ſurveyed by conſcious attentive reflexion. They are not, uſually, of force enough to wield the machine of man; to diſcompoſe his frame or diſtort his feature: and ſo rarely come to be ſuſceptible of *picture* or *repreſentation.* One may compare the ſubtle operations of theſe *ſentiments* on the human form, to the gentle breathing of the air on the face of nature. Its ſoft aſpirations may be perceived; its nimble and delicate ſpirit may diffuſe itſelf through *woods* and *fields*, and its pervading influence cheriſh and invigorate all *animal* or *vegetative being.* Yet no external ſigns evidence its *effects* to ſenſe. It acts inviſibly, and therefore no power of imitation can give it *form* and *colouring.* Its impulſes muſt, at leaſt, have a certain degree of ſtrength: it muſt *wave* the graſs, *incline* trees, and *ſcatter* leaves, before the painter can lay hold of it, and draw it into *deſcription.* Juſt ſo it is with our *calmer ſentiments.* They ſeldom ſtir or diſorder the human frame. They ſpring up caſually, and as circumſtances concur, within us; but, as it were, ſink and die away again, like paſſing gales, without leaving any impreſs or mark of violence behind them. In ſhort, when they do not grow out of *fixed characters*, or are prompted by *paſſion*, they do not, I believe, ever make themſelves viſible.

And this obſervation reaches as well to *event and action* in life, as to the *corporal figure* of the perſon in whom they operate. The ſentiments, here ſpoken of, however naturally or even neceſſarily they may occur to the mind on certain occaſions, yet, have ſeldom or never any immediate effect on con-

conſequent action. And the reaſon is, that we do not proceed to *act* on the ſole concluſions of the underſtanding; unleſs ſuch *concluſions*, by frequent meditation, or the cooperating influence of ſome affection, excite a ferment in the mind, and impell the will by *paſſion*. Such moral aphoriſms as theſe, "*that friendſhip is the medicine of life*," and, "*that our country, as including all other intereſts*, "*claims our firſt regard*," though likely to obtrude themſelves upon us on a thouſand occaſions, yet would never have urged Achilles to ſuch a train of action, as makes the ſtriking part of the Iliad; or Ulyſſes, to that which runs through the intire Odyſſey; if a ſtrong, inſtinctive affection in both had not conſpired to produce it. When *produced* therefore, they are to be conſidered as the genuine conſequences, not of theſe *moral ſentiments*, taken ſimply by themſelves, but of ſtrong benevolence of ſoul, implanted by *nature*, and ſtrengthened by *habit*. They are properly then, the reſult of the *manners*, or *paſſions*, which have been already contemplated. Our ſentiments, merely as ſuch, terminate in themſelves, and furniſh no external apparent matter to *deſcription*.

The ſame concluſion would, it muſt be owned, hold of our *religious*, as *moral* ſentiments, were we to regard them only in this view of *diſpaſſionate and cool reflexions*. For ſuch reflexions produce no change of *feature*, no alteration in the *form or countenance*, nor are they neceſſarily followed by any *ſenſible* demonſtration of their power in outward *action*. But then it uſually happens (which ſets the wideſt difference between the two caſes) that the *one*, as reſpecting an *object*, whoſe very *idea* intereſts ſtrongly, and puts all our faculties in motion, are, almoſt of neceſſity, aſſociated with the impelling

impelling cauſes of *affection*; and ſo expreſs themſelves in legible ſigns and characters. Whereas the other ſentiments, reſpecting *human nature and its neceſſities*, are frequently no other than a calm indifferent ſurvey of common life, unattended with any *emotion* or inciting principle of action. Hence *religion*, inſpiriting all its meditations with *enthuſiaſm*, generally ſhews itſelf in *outward ſigns*; whereas we frequently diſcern no traces, as neceſſarily attendant upon *moral*. Which *difference* is worth the noting, were it only for the ſake of ſeeing more diſtinctly the vaſt advantage of *poetry*, above all *other modes of imitation*. For *theſe*, explaining themſelves by the help of *natural media*, which preſent a *real reſemblance*, are able but imperfectly to deſcribe *religious ſentiments*; in as much as they expreſs the *general vague diſpoſition* only, and not the preciſe *ſentiments themſelves*. And in *moral*, they can frequently give us no *image* or repreſentation at all. While *poetry*, which tells its meaning by *artificial ſigns*, conveys diſtinct and clear notices of this claſs of *moral and religious* conceptions, which afford ſuch mighty entertainment to the human mind. But it ſerves to a further purpoſe, more immediately relative to the ſubject of this inquiry. For theſe *ethic and prudential* concluſions, being ſeen to produce no immediate *effect* in look, attitude, or action, we are to regard them only in their remoter and leſs direct conſequences, as influencing, at a diſtance, the civil and œconomical affairs of life.

And in this view they open a freſh field for *imitation*; not quite ſo ſtriking to the ſpectator, perhaps, but even larger, than *that*, into which religion, with all its multiform ſuperſtitions, before led us. For to theſe *internal writings*, aſſiſted and puſhed forward

forward by the wants and neceſſities of our nature, which ſet the inventive powers on work, are ultimately to be referred that vaſt congeries of *political, civil, commercial, and mechanic* inſtitutions, of thoſe infinite *manufactures, arts*, and *exerciſes*, which come in to the relief or embelliſhment of human life. Add to theſe all thoſe nameleſs *events and actions*, which tho' determined by no fixed *habit*, or leading *affection*, human prudence, providing for its ſecurity or intereſts, in certain circumſtances, naturally projects and preſcribes. Theſe are ample materials for *deſcription*; and the greater poetry neceſſarily comprehends a large ſhare of them. Yet in all delineations of this ſort two things are obſervable, 1. That in the *latter*, which are the pure reſult of our reaſonings concerning expediency, *common ſenſe*, in given conjunctures, often leads to the ſame meaſures: As when *Ulyſſes* in Homer diſguiſes himſelf, for the ſake of coming at a more exact information of the ſtate of his family; or, when *Oreſtes* in Sophocles does the ſame, to bring about the cataſtrophe of the *Electra*. 2. In reſpect of the *former* (which is of a principal conſideration) the eſtabliſhed modes and practices of life being the proper and only *archetype*, experience and common obſervation cannot fail of pointing, with the greateſt certainty, to them. So that in the *one* caſe different writers *may* concur in treating the *ſame* matter, in the *other*, they *muſt*. But this laſt will bear a little farther illuſtration.

The critics on Homer have remarked, with admiration, in him, the almoſt infinite variety of images and pictures, taken from the intire circle of *human arts*. Whatever the wit of man had invented for the ſervice or ornament of ſociety in manual exerciſes and operations is found to have a place in his

his writings. *Rural affairs*, in their ſeveral branches; the *mechanic*; and all the polite arts of *ſculpture*, *painting*, and *architecture*, are occaſionally hinted at in his poems; or, rather, their various imagery, ſo far as they were known and practiſed in thoſe times, is fully and largely diſplayed. Now this, tho' it ſhew the prodigious extent of his obſervation and diligent curioſity, which could ſearch thro' all the ſtorehouſes and magazines of *art*, for materials of deſcription, yet is not to be placed to the ſcore of his ſuperior *inventive faculty*; nor infers any thing to the diſadvantage of ſucceeding poets, whoſe ſubjects might oblige them to the ſame deſcriptions; any more than his vaſt acquaintance with *natural ſcenery*, in all its numberleſs appearances, implies a want of *genius* in later imitators, who, if they ventured, at all, into this province, were conſtrained to give us the *ſame unvaried repreſentations*.

The truth, as every one ſees, is, briefly, this. The reſtleſs and inquiſitive mind of man had ſucceeded in the diſcovery or improvement of the numberleſs arts of life. Theſe, for the convenience of method, are conſidered as making a large part of theſe ſenſible external *effects*, which ſpring from our internal *ſentiments* or *reaſonings*. But, tho' they ultimately reſpect theſe *reaſonings*, as their ſource, yet they, in no degree, depend on the actual exertion of them in the breaſt of the poet. He copies only the cuſtoms of the times, of which he writes, that is, the ſenſible *effects* themſelves. Theſe are permanent objects, and may, nay *muſt* be the *ſame*, whatever be the ability or genius of the *copier*. In ſhort, taken together, they make up what, in the largeſt ſenſe of the word, we may call, with the painters, *il coſtumè*; which tho' it be a real excellence ſcrupulouſly to obſerve, yet it requires nothing more than

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than exact obſervation and hiſtorical knowledge of *facts* to do it.

And now having the various objects of *poetical imitation* before us (the greater part of which, as appears, *muſt*, and the reſt *may*, occur to the obſervation of the poet) we come to this *concluſion*, which, tho' it may ſtartle the *paralleliſt*, there ſeems no method of eluding "that of any ſingle *image or ſenti-* "*ment*, conſidered ſeparately and by itſelf, it can "never be affirm'd certainly, hardly with any ſhew "of reaſon, merely on account of its agreement in "*ſubject-matter* with any other, that it was copied "from it." If there be any foundation of this inference, it muſt then be laid, not in the *matter*, but MANNER of imitation. But here, again, the ſubject branches out into various particulars; which, to be ſeen diſtinctly, will demand a new diviſion, and require us to proceed with leiſure and attention thro' it.

II.

The ſum of the foregoing *article* is this. The *objects* of imitation, like the *materials* of human knowledge, are a common ſtock, which experience furniſhes to all men. And it is in the *operations* of the mind upon them, that the glory of *poetry*, as of *ſcience*, conſiſts. Here the genius of the *poet* hath room to ſhew itſelf; and from hence alone is the praiſe of *originality* to be aſcertained. The fondeſt admirer of antient art would never pretend that *Palladio* had copied *Vitruvius*, merely from his working with the ſame materials of *wood*, *ſtone*, or *marble*, which this great maſter had employed before him. But were the general *deſign* of theſe two architects the *ſame* in any buildings; were their choice and arrangement of the ſmaller *members* remarkably ſimilar; were their works conducted in the

the ſame *ſtyle*, and their ornaments finiſhed in the ſame *taſte*; every one would be apt to pronounce, on firſt ſight, that the one was *borrowed* from the other. Even a correſpondency in any *one* of theſe points might create a ſuſpicion. For what likelihood, amidſt an infinite variety of *methods*, which offer themſelves, as to *each* of theſe particulars, that there ſhould be found, without *deſign*, a ſignal concurrence in *any one?* 'Tis then in the *uſage and diſpoſition* of the objects of poetry, that we are to ſeek for proofs and evidences of plagiariſm. And yet it may not be every inſtance of ſimilarity, that will ſatisfy here. For the queſtion recurs, "whether of the ſeveral *forms*, of which "his materials are ſuſceptible, there be no-"thing in the nature of things, which determines "the artiſt to prefer a *particular* one to all others." For it is poſſible, that *general principles* may as well account for a *conformity in the manner*, as we have ſeen them do for an *identity of matter*, in works of imitation. And to this queſtion nothing can be replied, till we have taken an accurate ſurvey of this *ſecond diviſion* of our ſubject. Luckily, the alluſion to architecture, juſt touched upon, points to the very method, in which it may be moſt diſtinctly purſued. For here too, the MANNER *of imitation*, if conſidered in its full extent, takes in 1. *The general plan or diſpoſition of a poem.* 2. *The choice and application of particular ſubjects.* *And* 3. *The expreſſion.*

1. *All poetry*, as lord Bacon admirably obſerves, "*nihil aliud eſt quam* HISTORIÆ IMITATIO AD "PLACITUM." By which is not meant, that the poet is at liberty to conduct his *imitation* abſolutely in any manner he pleaſes, but with ſuch deviations from the rule of hiſtory, as the *end* of poetry preſcribes.

ſcribes. This end is, univerſally, PLEASURE; as *that* of ſimple hiſtory, is, INFORMATION. And from a reſpect to this *end*, together with ſome proper allowance for the diverſity of the *ſubject matter*, and the *mode of imitation* (I mean whether it be in the way of *recital*, or of action,) are the eſſential differences of poetry from mere hiſtory, and the *form or diſpoſition* of it's ſeveral *ſpecies*, derived. What theſe *differences* are, and what the *general plan* in the compoſition of *each ſpecies*, will appear from conſidering the *defects* of ſimple hiſtory in reference to the *main end*, which poetry deſigns.

Some of theſe are obſerved by the great perſon, before mentioned, which I ſhall want no excuſe for giving in his own words.

" 1. Cum res geſtæ et eventus, qui veræ hiſtoriæ " ſubjiciuntur, non ſint ejus amplitudinis, in quâ " anima humana ſibi ſatisfaciat, præſto eſt *poëſis*, " quæ facta magis heroica confingat. 2. Cum hi- " ſtoria vera ſucceſſus rerum minime pro meritis " virtutum et ſcelerum, narret; corrigit eam *poëſis*, " & exitus & fortunas, ſecundum merita, & ex " lege Nemeſeos, exhibet. 3. Cum hiſtoria vera, " obviâ rerum ſatietate et ſimilitudine, animæ hu- " manæ faſtidio ſit; reficit eam poëſis, inexpec- " tata et varia et viciſſitudinum plena canens. — " Quare et merito etiam divinitatis cujuſpiam parti- " ceps videri poſſit; quia animum erigit et in " ſublime rapit; *rerum ſimulachra ad animi deſideria* " *accommodando, non animum rebus (quod ratio facit,* " *et hiſtoria) ſubmittendo*[o]."

Theſe *advantages* chiefly reſpect the *narrative* poetry, and above all, the *Epos*. There are others, ſtill more *general*, and more directly to the purpoſe of this inquiry. For 4. The *hiſtorian* is bound to

[o] DE AUGM. SCIENT. lib. ii. c. 13.

record

ecord *a ſeries of independent events and actions*; and ſo, at once, falls into two *defects*, which make him incapable of affording perfect *pleaſure* to the mind. For 1. The flow of paſſion, produced in us by contemplating *any ſignal event*, is greatly checked and diſturbed amidſt a *variety and ſucceſſion of actions*. And 2. being obliged to paſs with celerity over *each* tranſaction (for otherwiſe hiſtory would be too tedious for the purpoſe of *information*) he has not time to draw out *ſingle circumſtances* in full light and impreſs them with all their force on the Imagination. *Poetry* remedies theſe two defects. By confining the attention to *one* object only, it gives the fancy and affections fair play. And by bringing forth to view and even magnifying all the *circumſtances* of that *one*, it gives to every ſubject its proper dignity and importance. 5. Laſtly, to ſatisfy the human mind, there muſt not only be an *unity, and integrity*, but a ſtrict *connexion and continuity* of the fable or action repreſented. Otherwiſe the mind languiſhes, and the tranſition of the paſſions, which gives the chief pleaſure, is broken and interrupted. The *hiſtorian* fails, alſo, in this. By proceeding in the gradual and orderly ſucceſſion of *time*, the ſeveral incidents, which compoſe the ſtory, are not laid cloſe enough together to content the natural avidity of our expectations. Whilſt *poetry*, neglecting this regularity of ſucceſſion and ſetting out in the midſt of the ſtory, gratifies our inſtinctive impatience, and carries the *affections* along, with the utmoſt rapidity, towards the *event*.

Theſe *advantages* are common both to *narrative* and *dramatic* poetry. But the *drama*, as profeſſing to copy *real life*, contents itſelf with theſe. The reſt belong entirely to the province of *narration*.

Now the *general forms* of poetical method, as diſtinct from *that* of hiſtory, are the pure reſult of our concluſions concerning the expediency and fitneſs of theſe *means*, as conducive to the proper *end* of poetry. Which, without more words, will inform us, how it came to paſs, that the *true plan or diſpoſition of poetical* works, was ſo early hit upon in *practice*, and eſtabliſhed by exact *theories*; and may therefore ſatisfy us of the *neceſſary* reſemblance and uniformity of all productions of this kind, whether their authors had, or had not, been guided by the pole-ſtar of *example*.

And to ſupport this concluſion by the evidence of *fact*, I ſhall remind the reader of *one*, above all exception.

The ſtate of poetry among the Chineſe, as appears from the beſt accounts of that people, is very imperfect. Their eſſays in this way are, for the moſt part, little ſlight pieces, not unlike the ſonnets, madrigals, and ſongs of our European poets. But, tho' they ſeem not to have ſtudied poetry, as an art, or have brought the greater ſpecies of it to perfection, yet the innate love of contemplating human life in the mirror of ſcenical repreſentation would not ſuffer them to be wholly ignorant of the drama. They even cultivate it with ſome pains; and theatrical performances, we are told, are with them, as amongſt us, the chief of their feſtival entertainments. Now in a country, ſo remote in ſituation, and ſecluded by its circumſtances, and not leſs by the native pride and ſufficiency of its inhabitants, from all commerce with other nation, it will not even bear a ſuſpicion that their ideas of dramatic writing can be *deriv'd*. We may be ſure, that nothing but their own unaſſiſted ſenſe hath been their guide in theſe matters; ſo that ſhould any conformity

mity appear between their *drama*, and ours, nothing could better evince the efficacy of *general principles* to bring about a ſimilitude in the *method* of compoſition. By good fortune, we have an opportunity of examining, whether there be, or not. The very diligent and inquiſitive P. DU HALDE hath obliged us with a ſpecimen of their productions in this kind, which anſwers, in a ſurprizing manner, to the theory, here delivered.

The title of this *Chineſe drama* is the ORPHAN OF THE HOUSE OF CHAU: And the ſubject, in brief, this. A bloody, vindictive miniſter, jealous of the credit of a rival in the good graces of his maſter, after ſome ſucceſsleſs attempts on his life, drives him from court, kills his only ſon, and contrives a method for putting the reſt of his family, to the number of three hundred perſons, to death. An infant of the perſecuted miniſter's ſon is, alone, preſerved from this general carnage, who gives name to the *tragedy*. And the whole turns upon this *event*, viz. the revenge, which the ſurviving *orphan*, after ſome eſcapes and adventures, takes of the enemy of his family. This is the ſimple *argument* of the piece. Let us now ſee, in what *manner* nature hath taught our Chineſe poet to conduct it.

The eſſentials of *dramatic poetry*, as we have ſeen, are, 1. That there be *an unity and integrity of action*; and 2. That, for the ſake of *continuity*, the incidents of the ſtory be brought cloſe together; or, in other words, that the *action* begin as near the *cataſtrophe*, as poſſible. All elſe may be regarded as acceſſary or circumſtantial. To apply theſe rules to the tragedy before us:

The *fable*, as was ſaid, is *the overthrow of the cruel miniſter by the orphan*. The ſubject is, in a manner,

delivered in form, in a ſort of proëme, prefixed to the play, when his dying father gives it in charge to his "friends to take great care of his ſon, that, when he "came to age, he might revenge his family." Accordingly every thing reſpects this ſingle point. No unconcerning epiſodes are thrown in, for ornament; but each part contributes in its place, to forward and accelerate the completion of it. The play begins with the miniſter's jealouſy of the orphan, and his attempts to get him into his power. And ſeveral ſucceeding ſcenes are taken up in recounting his eſcapes, by means of ſome truſty friends of his family, till, at length, the ſuſpicions of his perſecutor being apeaſed by the ſlaughter of another infant, miſtaken for him, matters are ſo contrived, that the orphan is received into the miniſter's own houſe, and even educated as his adopted ſon. An old phyſician, firmly attached to the intereſts of the houſe of *Chau*, and to whoſe addreſs and management the orphan owed his life, is received together with him, and hath the charge of his education. All this the dialogue repreſents very naturally, and accompliſhes with great art and probability.

The orphan being now twenty years old, it was time he ſhould be let into the ſecret of his deſtiny. This ſort of *informations* is very frequent in dramatic writings, and always extremely intereſting; but I ſcarcely recollect *any* conducted with more beauty, than this before us. The old phyſician, who had hitherto been reputed his natural father, as well as preceptor, contrives to have the whole hiſtory of his family, painted in a roll of paper (a fine and natural expedient amongſt a people ſo addicted to *picture*) which he throws in the orphan's way; intending by that means to excite his curioſity, and to take occaſion, from thence, of explaining the

the whole to him, at his own requeſt. The project ſucceeds. The orphan, coming into his library, as uſual, to receive his inſtructions, finds his father in tears, the painted roll lying by him, and deſires to have it explained. The father, with ſome ſeeming reluctance, conſents, and interprets the whole to him. The effect of which is to rouze the reſentments and indignation of the orphan, who immediately proceeds to execute the intended vengeance on the miniſter.

This is a ſhort analyſis of our Chineſe tragedy; from whence it appears, that the two eſſential rules, before ſpoken of, are obſerved in it with a degree of exactneſs, not always to be found in the works of more knowing dramatiſts. For 1. The action is ſtrictly *one*. The deſtruction of the enemy of *the houſe of Chau* is the ſingle event, on which our attention turns from the beginning; we ſee it gradually prepared and brought on; and with its completion the tragedy finiſhes. 2. The action proceeds with almoſt as much rapidity, as Ariſtotle himſelf demands. For the poet doth not walk the entire circuit of his ſtory, but *ruſhes*, as the precept is, *in medias res*; nature having inſtructed this ſimple deſigner that, to intereſt the affections ſtrongly in the action of his play, it was neceſſary for him to ſet out very near the *event*. Accordingly, the *efficient cauſe* of this tragic action, *the jealouſy of the cruel miniſter, his plots and contrivances againſt his rival, his baniſhment of him, and murder of his family and adherents*, all theſe incidents in the ſtory are purpoſely paſſed by, and the drama commences with the miniſter's uneaſy ſuſpicions from the ſurviving orphan. Yet, as theſe particulars were of neceſſity, to be known (for otherwiſe the ſubject had been unintelligible) he contrives, as the Greek writers had done before

him, to give the audience this previous information, by way of *Prologue*.

The reader will not aſk, if the method, here taken, be the moſt perfect, that might have been invented. It, apparently, is not. In ſtrictneſs, the commencement of the action ſhould have been brought ſtill nearer to the *event*. It ſhould have opened with the orphan's projected vengeance. Even, the preceptor's *information* ſhould have preceded it. We may ſee, by comparing it with the *Electra of Sophocles*, a ſubject of near reſemblance to this, what are its proper defects, and in what manner they might have been remedied. But it ſuffices, that the poet was not unacquainted with what is moſt eſſential to *dramatic method*.

To have done with this *tragedy*, at once, I would further obſerve (tho' it be ſomewhat out of place) that there are, beſides, ſeveral leſſer marks of *coincidence* between this Chineſe and the Græcian models; ſuch as the circumſtance of the orphan's concealment and protection in the hands of a faithful and honeſt governour, the very ſame expedient which Sophocles had imagined for the preſervation of Oreſtes—the motive to revenge, drawn from the ſolemn injunctions of a *dying father*, analogous to that, which, in the Greek poet, ariſes from the command of the *oracle*—many particular expreſſions of diſtreſs—proverbial obſervations—moral ſentiments—and let me add, an intermixture of ſongs in the paſſionate parts, heightened into ſublime poetry, and ſomewhat reſembling the character of the ancient chorus. But my proper buſineſs is with the *general plan or ſtructure of this poem*; which, in the main, agrees very well to the *Greek form*, and is the more remarkable, as there appears, in the reſt, a ſingular ſimplicity and want of artifice throughout; which

which is ſeen from hence, that the ſeveral actors, on their entrance on the ſtage, begin with telling their names and characters and declaring their buſineſs. So that, if in this rude ſtate of their poetry, common ſenſe could lead the Chineſe to ſuch an identity of compoſition with that of Greece, what *effects* muſt it not have in more enlightened countries and times, where the diſcipline of long experience, and criticiſm (which is improved common ſenſe) come into the aſſiſtance of the poet? Under theſe advantages, the ſtricteſt *conformity* may well be thought the reſult of common principles, which yet we agree to explode under the opprobrious name of *imitation*.

So much for the *general forms* of the two greater *kinds* of poetry. If a proper allowance be made for a diverſity of *ſubject-matter*, in either *mode* of compoſition, it will be eaſy, as I ſaid, to account for the *particular forms* of the ſeveral ſubordinate ſpecies. And I the rather chooſe to do it in this way, and not from the peculiar *end* of each, which indeed were more philoſophical, becauſe the buſineſs is to make appear, how nature leads to the ſame general plan of compoſition in *practice*, not to eſtabliſh the laws of each in the way of exact *theory*. Now in conſidering the matter *hiſtorically*, the diverſity of *ſubject-matter* was doubtleſs *that* which firſt determined the writer to a different *form* of compoſition, tho' afterwards, a conſideration of the *end*, accompliſhed by *each*, be requiſite to deduce, with more preciſion of method, its diſtinct laws. The *latter* is that from whence the *ſpeculative critic* rightly eſtimates the character of every ſpecies; but the *inventor* had his direction principally from the *former*.

Let me exemplify the obſervation in an inſtance under either *mode* of imitation, and leave the reſt to the reader.

1. The GEORGIC is a ſpecies of *narration*. But, as *things*, not *perſons*, are its ſubject (from which laſt alone the *unity of deſign*, and *continuity of action* ariſe) this circumſtance abſolves it from the neceſſity of obſerving any other laws, but thoſe of clear and perſpicuous diſpoſition, and of enlivening a matter, naturally unintereſting, by *exquiſite expreſſion* and *pleaſing digreſſions*.

2. The HYMNS of the pagan poets to their gentilitial gods may be conſidered as a lower ſpecies of the *drama*; of the drama in its original ſtate, when *one actor* only was required to give life to public devotion, and when the *unity* of its form conſiſted in an addreſs to *one* deity. For this is all the affinity they have to the *dramatic form*. As to the reſt, we find them running out, in a kind of diſorderly rapture, into the celebration of their popular honours and traditional atchievements. Nor could it be otherwiſe. For theſe addreſſes are but the *overflowings* of gratitude and admiration, dilating on the *various* topics of their praiſe. And as ſuch, the forms of *ſtricter method* are, as well by the *genius* of the compoſition, as the *nature* of the ſubject, utterly excluded. And of this we may aſſure ourſelves by comparing *their* character with that of the untaught ſtrains of Indian ſuperſtition, on the one hand, and the inſpired gratulations of Hebrew piety, on the other.

II. But, tho' the *end* of poetry, together with the ſubjects of its ſeveral ſpecies, may determine the *general plan*, yet is there nothing, it may be ſaid, in the nature of things to fix *the order and connection of ſingle parts*. And here it will be owned, is great room

room for *invention* to ſhew itſelf. The materials of poetry may be put together in ſo many different manners, conſiſtently with the *form* which governs each ſpecies, that nothing but the power of *imitation* can be reaſonably thought to produce *a cloſe and perpetual ſimilarity* in the compoſition of two works. I have ſaid *a cloſe and perpetual ſimilarity*; for it is not every degree of reſemblance, that will do here.

The *general plan itſelf* of any poem will occaſion ſome unavoidable conformities in the diſpoſition of its component parts. The *identity or ſimilarity* of the ſubject may create others. Or, if no other aſſimilating cauſe intervene, the very uniformity of common nature will, of neceſſity, introduce ſome. To explain myſelf as to the laſt of theſe *cauſes*.

The principal conſtituent members of any work, next to the eſſential parts of the *fable*, are EPISODES; DESCRIPTIONS, SIMILIES. By *deſcriptions* I underſtand as well the delineation of *characters* in their *ſpeeches and imputed ſentiments*, as of *places or things* in the draught of their attending circumſtances. Now not only the materials of theſe are common to all poets, but the ſame identical manner of aſſemblage in application of *each* in any poem will, in numberleſs caſes, appear neceſſary.

1. The *epiſode* belongs, principally, to the epic muſe; and the deſign of it is to diverſify and ennoble the narration by *digreſſive*, yet not *unrelated*, ornaments; the *former* circumſtance relieving the *ſimplicity* of the epic fable, while the *other* prevents its *unity* from being violated. Now theſe epiſodical narrations muſt either proceed from the poet himſelf, or be imputed to ſome other who is engaged in the courſe of the fable; and in either caſe, muſt help, indirectly at leaſt, to forward it.

If

If of the *latter* kind, a probable pretext muſt be contrived for their introduction; which can be no other than that of ſatisfying the *curioſity*, or of ſerving to the neceſſary *information*, of ſome other. And in either of theſe ways a ſtriking conformity in the mode of conducting the work is unavoidable.

If the *epiſode* be referred to the *former* claſs, its *manner* of introduction will admit a greater latitude. For it will vary with the ſubject, or occaſions of relating it. Yet we ſhall miſtake, if we believe theſe ſubjects, and conſequently the occaſions, connected with them, very numerous. 1. They muſt be of uncommon dignity and ſplendor; otherwiſe nothing can excuſe the going out of the way to inſert them. 2. They muſt have ſome apparent connection with the fable. 3. They muſt further accord to the idea and ſtate of the times, from which the *fable* is taken. Put theſe things together, and ſee if they will not with probability, account for ſome coincidence *in the choice and applications* of the *direct* epiſode. And admitting this, the ſimilarity of even *its* conſtituent parts is, alſo, neceſſary.

The genius of Virgil never ſuffers more, in the opinion of his critics, than when his *book of games* comes into conſideration and is confronted with Homer's. It is not unpleaſant to obſerve the difficulties an advocate for his fame is put to in this nice point, to ſecure his honour from the imputation of *plagiariſm*. The deſcriptions are accurately examined; and the improvement of a ſingle circumſtance, the addition of an epithet, even the novelty of a metaphor, or varied turn in the expreſſion, is diligently remarked and urged, with triumph, in favour of his invention. Yet all this goes but a little way towards ſtilling the clamour. The entire deſign is manifeſtly taken; nay, particular incidents

cidents and circumſtantials are, for the moſt part, the ſame, without variation. What ſhall we ſay, then, to this charge? Shall we, in defiance of truth and fact, endeavour to confute it? Or, if allowed, is there any method of ſupporting the reputation of the poet? I think there is, if prejudice will but ſuſpend its determinations a few minutes, and afford his advocate a fair hearing.

The epic plan, more eſpecially that of the Æneis, naturally comprehends whatever is moſt auguſt in *civil* and *religious* affairs. The ſolemnities of funeral rites, and the feſtivities of public games (which religion had made an eſſential part of them) were, of neceſſity, to be included in a repreſentation of the *latter*. But what *games?* Surely thoſe, which antient heroiſm vaunted to excell in; thoſe, which the uſage of the times had conſecrated; and which, from the opinion of reverence and dignity, entertained of them, were become moſt fit for the pomp of epic deſcription. Further, what *circumſtances* could be noted in theſe ſports? Certainly thoſe, which befell moſt uſually, and were the apteſt to alarm the ſpectator and make him take an intereſt in them. Theſe, it will be ſaid, are numerous. They were ſo; yet ſuch as are moſt to the poet's purpoſe, were, with little or no variation, the ſame. It happened luckily for him, that two of his *games*, on which accordingly he hath exerted all the force of his genius, were entirely new. This advantage, the circumſtances of the times afforded him. The *Naumachia* was purely his own. Yet ſo liable are even the beſt and moſt candid judges to be haunted by this ſpectre of *imitation*, that *one*, whom every friend to every human excellence honours, cannot help, on comparing it with the *chariot-race* of Homer, exclaiming in theſe words; "what is the encounter of

"Cloanthus

" Cloanthus and Gyas in the ſtrait between the " rocks, but the ſame with that of Menelaus and " Antilochus in the hollow way? Had the galley " of Serjeſtus been broken, if the chariot of Eume- " lus had not been demoliſhed? Or, Mneſtheus " been caſt from the helm, had not the other been " thrown from his ſeat?" The plain truth is, it was not poſſible, in deſcribing an antient *ſea-fight*, for one, who had even never ſeen Homer, to overlook ſuch uſual and ſtriking particulars, as *the juſtling of ſhips, the breaking of galleys, and loſs of pilots.*

It may appear from this inſtance, with what reaſon a ſimilarity of circumſtance, in the other games, hath been objected. The *ſubject-matter* admitted not any material variation: I mean in the hands of a judicious copier of nature. And Virgil was too jealous of the honour of that character, which is peculiarly his own, to hazard it for the ſake of acquiring the falſe fame of *originality*. But we may go further; and demonſtrate, that, in the caſe before us, he unqueſtionably judged right.

A defect of *natural ability* is not that, which the critics have been moſt forward to charge upon *Statius*. A perſon of true taſte, who, in a fanciful way, hath contrived to give us the juſt character of the Latin poets, in aſſigning to this poet the topmoſt ſtation on Parnaſſus, ſufficiently acknowledges the vigour and activity of his genius. Yet, in compoſing his *Thebaid* (an old ſtory taken from the heroic ages, which obliged him to the celebration of *funeral obſequies* with the attending ſolemnities of *public games*) to avoid the diſhonour of following too cloſely on the heels of Homer and Virgil, who had not only taken the ſame *route*, but purſued it in the moſt direct and natural courſe, he reſolved, at all

all adventures, to keep at due diſtance from them, and to make his way, as well as he could, more *obliquely* to the ſame end. To accompliſh this, he was forced, tho' in the deſcription of the ſame individual *games*, to look out for different *circumſtances and events* in them; that ſo the identity of his *ſubject*, which he could not avoid, might, in ſome degree, be attoned for by the diverſity of his *manner* in treating it. It muſt be owned, that great ingenuity as well as induſtry have been uſed, in executing this project. Had it been practicable, the character, juſt given of this poet, makes it credible, he muſt have ſucceeded in it. Yet, ſo impoſſible it is, without deſerting nature herſelf, to diſſent from her faithful copiers, that the main objection to the ſixth book of the *Thebaid* hath ariſen from this fruitleſs endeavour of being *original*, where common ſenſe and the reaſon of the thing would not permit it. "In the particular deſcriptions of each of theſe "games (ſays the great writer, before quoted, "and from whoſe ſentence in matters of taſte, "there lies no appeal) *Statius* hath not borrowed "from either of his predeceſſors, *and his poem is* "*ſo much the worſe for it.*"

2. The caſe of DESCRIPTION is ſtill clearer, and, after what has been ſo largely diſcourſed on the *ſubjects* of it, will require but few words. For it muſt have appeared, in conſidering them, that not only the *objects* themſelves are neceſſarily obtruded on the poet, but that the *occaſions* of introducing them are alſo reſtrained by many limitations. If we reflect a little, we ſhall find, that they grow out of the *action* repreſented, which, in the greater poetry, implies a great *ſimilarity*, even when moſt *different*. What, for inſtance, is the purpoſe of *the epic poet*, but to ſhew his hero under

der the moſt awful and intereſting circumſtances of human life? To this end ſome general deſign is formed. He muſt *war* with Achilles, or *voyage* with Ulyſſes. And, to work up his *fable* to that *magnificence*, ΜΕΓΑΛΟΠΡΕΠΕΙΑΝ, which Ariſtotle rightly obſerves to be the characteriſtic of this poem, *heaven* and *hell* muſt alſo be intereſted in the ſucceſs of his enterpize. And what is this, in *effect*, but to own, that the pomp of *epic deſcription*, in its draught of *battles*, with its ſeveral *accidents*; of *ſtorms*, *ſhipwrecks*, &c. *of the intervention of gods*, or *machination of devils*, is, in great meaſure, determined, not only as to the *choice*, but *application* of it, to the poet's hands? And the like concluſion extends to ſtill minuter particularities.

What concerns the delineation of *characters* may ſeem to carry with it more difficulty. Yet, though theſe are infinitely diverſified by diſtinct peculiar lineaments, poetry cannot help falling into the ſame *general* repreſentation. For it is converſant about the *greater characters*; ſuch as demand the imputation of like *manners*, and who are actuated by the ſame governing *paſſions*. To ſet off theſe, *the ſame combination of circumſtances* muſt frequently be imagined; at leaſt ſo *ſimilar*, as to bring on the ſame ſeries of repreſentation. The *piety* of *one* hero, and the *love of his country*, which characterizes *another*, can only be ſhewn by the influence of the *ruling principle* in each, conſtraining them to neglect inferior conſiderations, and to give up all ſubordinate affections to it. The more prevalent the *affection*, the greater the *ſacrifice*, and the more ſtrongly is the *character* marked. Hence, without doubt, the *Calypſo* of Homer. And need we look farther than the inſtructions of *common nature* for a ſimilar contrivance in a *later* poet? Not to

to be tedious on a matter, which admits no diſpute, the dramatic writings of all times may convince us of *two things*, 1. "*that the actuating paſ-*
"*ſions of men are univerſally and invariably the*
"*ſame*;" and 2. "*that they expreſs themſelves con-*
"*ſtantly in ſimilar effects.*" Or, one ſingle ſmall volume, *the characters of Theophraſtus*, will ſufficiently do it. And what more is required to juſtify this conſequence, "that *the deſcriptions of cha-*
"*racters*, even in the moſt original *deſigners*, will
"reſemble each other;" and "that the very *con-*
"*texture* of a work, deſigned to evidence them in
"*action*, will, under the management of diffe-
"rent writers, be, frequently, much the ſame?" A *concluſion*, which indeed is neither mine nor any novel one, but was long ago inſiſted on by a diſcerning antient, and applied to the comic drama, in theſe words,

—Si perſonis iſdem uti aliis non licet,
Qui magis licet currentis ſervos ſcribere,
Bonas matronas facere, meretrices malas,
Paraſitum edacem, glorioſum militem,
Puerum ſupponi, falli per ſervum ſenem,
AMARE, ODISSE, SUSPICARI?

3. In truth, ſo far as *direct and immediate deſcription* is concerned, the matter is ſo plain, that it will hardly be called into queſtion. The difficulty is to account for the ſimilarity of *metaphor and* COMPARISON (that is, of *imagery*, which comes in obliquely, and for the purpoſe of illuſtrating ſome other, and, frequently, very remote and diſtant ſubject) obſervable in all writers. Here it may not ſeem quite ſo eaſy to make out an original claim; for, though deſcriptions of the *ſame object*, when it occurs, muſt needs be ſimilar, yet

it

it remains to ſhew how the ſame object comes, in this caſe, to occur at all. Before an anſwer can be given to this queſtion, it muſt be obſerved, 1. that there is in the mind of man, not only a ſtrong natural love of *imitation*, but of *compariſon*. We are not only fond of *copying* ſingle objects, as they preſent themſelves, but we delight to ſet two objects together, and contemplate their mutual aſpects and appearances. The *pleaſure* we find in this exerciſe of the imagination is the main ſource of that perpetual uſage of *indirect and alluſive imagery* in the writings of the poets; for I need not here conſider the *neceſſity* of the thing, and the unavoidable introduction of ſenſible images into all language. 2. This work of *compariſon* is not gone about by the mind *cauſeleſsly and capriciouſly*. There are certain obvious and ſtriking reſemblances in nature, which the poet is carried neceſſarily to obſerve, and which offer themſelves to him on the ſlighteſt exerciſe and exertion of his *comparing* powers. It may be difficult to explain the cauſes of this eſtabliſhed relationſhip in all caſes; or to ſhew diſtinctly, what theſe ſecret ties and connexions are, which link the objects of ſenſe together, and draw the imagination thus inſenſibly from one ſubject to another. The moſt obvious and natural is that of *actual ſimilitude*, whether in *ſhape*, *attitude*, *colour*, or *aſpect*. As when *heroes* are compared to *gods*,--*a hero in act to ſtrike at his foe*, to *a faulcon ſtooping at a dove*,—*blood running down the ſkin*, to *the ſtaining of ivory*,—*corn waving with the wind*, to *water in motion*. Sometimes the aſſociating cauſe lies in the *effect*. As when the *return of a good prince to his country* is compared *to the ſun*,—a *freſh gale to mariners*, to *the timely coming of a general to his troops*, &c. more commonly, in ſome

ſome *property*, *attribute*, or *circumſtance*. Thus an *intrepid* hero ſuggeſts the idea of a *rock*, on account of *its firmneſs and ſtability*,—of *a lion*, for his *fierceneſs*,—*of a deer encompaſſed* with wolves, *when ſurrounded with enemies*. In ſhort, for I pretend not to make a complete enumeration of the *grounds* of connexion, whatever the mind obſerves in any object, that bears an analogy to ſomething in any other, becomes the *occaſion* of compariſon betwixt them; and the fancy, which is ever, in a great genius, quick at eſpying theſe *traits* of reſemblance, and delights to ſurvey them, let's ſlip no opportunity of ſetting them over againſt each other, and producing them to obſervation.

But whatever be the *cauſes*, which aſſociate the ideas of the poet, and how fantaſtic ſoever, or even caſual may ſometimes appear to be the *ground* of ſuch aſſociation, yet, in reſpect of the greater works of genius, there will ſtill be found the moſt exact *uniformity* of alluſion, the ſame ideas and aſpects of things conſtantly admoniſhing the poet of the ſame *reſemblances and relations*. I ſay, in *the greater works of genius*, which muſt be attended to; for the folly of taking *reſemblances* for *imitations*, in this province of *alluſion*, hath ariſen from hence; that the poet is believed to have all art and nature before him, and to be at liberty to fetch his *hints* of ſimilitude and correſpondence from every diſtant and obſcure corner of the univerſe. That is, the genius of the epic, dramatic, and univerſally, of the greater, poetry hath not been comprehended, nor their diſtinct laws and characters diſtinguiſhed from thoſe of an inferior ſpecies.

The *mutual habitudes and relations*, (at leaſt what the mind is capable of regarding as *ſuch*) ſubſiſting between thoſe innumerable objects of thought and

ſenſe, which make up the entire, natural, and intellectual world, are indeed infinite; and if the poet be allowed to aſſociate and bring together all thoſe ideas, wherein the ingenuity of the mind can perceive any remote ſign or glimpſe of *reſemblance*, it were truly wonderful, that, in any number of images and alluſions, there ſhould be found a cloſe conformity of them with thoſe of any other writer. But this is far from being the caſe. For 1. the more auguſt poetry diſclaims, as unſuited to its ſtate and dignity, that inquiſitive and anxious diligence, which pries into nature's retirements; and ſearches through all her ſecret and hidden haunts, to detect a forbidden commerce, and expoſe to light ſome ſtrange unexpected conjunction of ideas. This quaint combination of remote, unallied imagery, conſtitutes a ſpecies of entertainment, which, for its *novelty*, may amuſe and divert the mind in other compoſitions; but is wholly inconſiſtent with the reſerve and ſolemnity of the *graver* forms. There is too much curioſity of art, too ſolicitous an affectation of *pleaſing* in theſe ingenious exerciſes of the fancy to ſuit with the ſimple majeſty of the *epos* or *drama*; which diſdains to caſt about for forced and tortured alluſions, and aims only to expoſe, in the faireſt light, ſuch, as are moſt obvious and natural. 2. This work of *indirect imagery* is intended, not ſo much to illuſtrate and enforce the original thought, to which it is applied, as to amuſe and entertain the fancy, by holding up to view, in theſe occaſional digreſſive repreſentations, the pictures of pleaſing ſcenes and objects. But this *end* of alluſion (which is principal in the ſublimer works of genius) reſtrains the poet to the uſe of a few ſelect images, for the moſt part taken from obvious common nature; theſe

theſe being always moſt illuſtrious in themſelves, and therefore moſt apt to ſeize and captivate the imagination of the reader. Thus is the poet confined, by the very nature of his work, to a very moderate compaſs of alluſion, on both theſe accounts; *firſt*, as he muſt employ the eaſieſt and moſt apparent reſemblances: and *ſecondly*, of *theſe*, ſuch as impreſs the moſt delightful images on the fancy.

This being the caſe, it cannot but happen, that the alluſions of different poets, of the higher claſs, though writing without any communication with each other, will, of courſe, be much the ſame on ſimilar occaſions. There are fixed and real analogies between different *material objects*; between theſe objects, and the *inward workings* of the mind; and, again, between theſe, and the *external ſigns* of them. Such, on every occaſion, will not only offer themſelves to the ſearching eye of the poet, but almoſt force themſelves upon him; ſo that if he ſubmit to be guided by the moſt natural views of things, he cannot avoid a very remarkable correſpondence of imagery with his predeceſſors. And we find this concluſion verified in fact; as appears not only from comparing together the great antient and modern writers, who are known to have held an intimate correſpondence with each other, but thoſe, who cannot be ſuſpected of this commerce. Several critics, I obſerved, have taken great pains to illuſtrate the *ſentiments* of Homer from ſimilar inſtances in the ſacred writers. The ſame deſign might eaſily be carried on, in reſpect of *alluſive imagery*, it being obvious to common obſervation, that numberleſs of the moſt beautiful *compariſons* in the Greek poet are to be met with in the Hebrew prophets. Nay, the remark may

be extended to the undiſciplined writers and ſpeakers of the fartheſt *weſt* and *eaſt*, whom nature inſtructs to beautify and adorn their conceptions with the ſame imagery. So little doth it argue an inferiority of genius in Virgil, if it be true, as the excellent tranſlator of Homer ſays, "that he "has ſcarcely any *compariſons*, which are not "drawn from his maſter."

The truth is, the *nature* of the two ſubjects, which the Greek poet had taken upon himſelf to adorn, was ſuch, that it led him through every circumſtance and ſituation of human life; which his quick attentive obſervation readily found the means of ſhewing to advantage under the cover of the moſt fit and proper imagery. Succeeding writers, who had *not* contemplated his pictures, yet, drawing from one common original, have unknowingly hit upon the very ſame. And thoſe, who *had*, with all their endeavours after *novelty*, and the utmoſt efforts of genius to ſtrike out original lights, have never been able to ſucceed in their attempts. Our *Milton*, who was moſt ambitious of this fame of *invention*, and whoſe vaſt and univerſal genius could not have miſſed of new *analogies*, had nature's ſelf been able to furniſh them, is a glaring inſtance to our purpoſe. He was ſo averſe from reſting in the old imagery of Homer, and the other epic poets, that he appears to have taken infinite pains in the inveſtigation of new *alluſions*, which he picked up out of the rubbiſh of every ſilly legend or romance, that had come to his knowledge, or extracted from the dry and rugged materials of the ſciences, and even the mechanic arts. Yet, in compariſon of the genuine treaſures of nature, which he found himſelf obliged to make uſe of, in common with other writers, his own

own proper ſtock of *images*, imported from the regions of *art*, is very poor and ſcanty; and, as might be expected, makes the leaſt agreeable part of his divine work.

What is here ſaid of the epic holds, as I hinted, of all the more ſerious kinds of poetry. In works of a lighter caſt, there is greater liberty and a larger field of alluſion permitted to the poet. All the appearances in *art and nature*, betwixt which there is any reſemblance, may be employed here to ſurprize and divert the fancy. The farther and more remote from vulgar apprehenſion theſe analogies lie, ſo much the fitter for his purpoſe, which is not ſo much to illuſtrate his ideas, as to place them in new and uncommon lights, and entertain the mind by that odd fantaſtic conjunction, or oppoſition of ideas, which we know by the name of *wit*. Nay the *loweſt*, as well as the leaſt obvious imagery will be, oftentimes, the moſt proper; his view being not to innoble and raiſe his ſubject by the means of *alluſion*, but to ſink and debaſe it by every art, that hath a tendency to excite the mirth and provoke the ridicule of the reader. Here then we may expect a much more original air, than in the higher deſigns of invention. When all nature is before the poet, and the genius of his work allows him to ſeize her, as the ſhepherd did Proteus, in every dirty form, into which ſhe can poſſibly twiſt herſelf, it were, indeed, a wonder, if he ſhould *chance* to coincide, in his imagery, with any other, from whom he had not expreſsly copied. They, who are converſant in works of *wit and humour*, more eſpecially of theſe later times, will know this to be the caſe, in *fact*. There is not perhaps a ſingle compariſon in the inimitable TELEMAQUE, which had not, before, been employed

by ſome or other of the poets. Can any thing, like this, be ſaid of RABLAIS, BUTLER, MARVEL, SWIFT, &c.

III. It only remains to conſider the EXPRESSION. And in this are to be found the ſureſt and leaſt equivocal marks of *imitation*. We may regard it in *two* lights; either 1. as it reſpects the *general* turn or manner of writing, which we call a *ſtyle*; or 2. the peculiarities of *phraſe and diction*.

1. A *ſtyle* in writing, if not formed in expreſs imitation of ſome certain *model*, is the pure reſult of the diſpoſition of the mind, and takes its character from the predominant *quality* of the writer. Thus *a ſhort and compact*, and a *diffuſed and flowing* expreſſion are the proper conſequences of certain correſponding characters of the human genius. One has a vigorous comprehenſive conception, and therefore collects his ſenſe into few words. Another, whoſe imagination is more languid, contemplates his objects leiſurely, and ſo diſplays their beauties in a greater compaſs of words, and with more circumſtance and parade of language. A polite and elegant humour delights in the grace of eaſe and perſpicuity. A ſevere and melancholic ſpirit inſpires a forcible but involved expreſſion. There are many other nicer differences and peculiarities of *manner*, which, though not reducible, perhaps, to general heads, the critic of true taſte eaſily underſtands. The Greek Rhetoricians have attempted to purſue this matter with ſome accuracy.

2. As men of different tempers and diſpoſitions aſſume a different caſt of expreſſion, ſo may the ſame obſervation be applied, ſtill more *generally*, to different *countries and times*. It may be difficult to explain the *efficient cauſes* of this diverſity, which I have

I have no concern with at preſent. The *fact* is, that the eloquence of the *eaſtern* world has, at all times, been of another ſtrain from that of the *weſtern*. And, alſo, in the ſeveral provinces of *each*, there has been ſome peculiar *note* of variation. The *Aſiatic*, of old, had its proper ſtamp, which diſtinguiſhed it from the *Attic*; juſt as the *Italian*, *French*, and *Spaniſh* wits have, each, their ſeveral characteriſtic manners of expreſſion.

A different ſtate of *times* has produced the like effect; which a late writer accounts for, not unaptly, from what he calls a *progreſſion of life and manners*. That which cannot be diſputed is, that the *modes* of writing undergo a perpetual change or variation in every country. And it is further obſervable, that theſe *changes* in one country, under ſimilar circumſtances, have a ſignal correſpondence to thoſe, which the inceſſant rotation of taſte brings about in every other.

Let it ſuffice to have put down theſe remarks without further illuſtration. The uſe, the diſcerning reader will make of them, is, that if different writers agree in the ſame *general diſpoſition*, are under the influence of the ſame *national character*; live together in the *ſame period of time*; or in correſponding periods of the *progreſſion of manners*, in every of theſe caſes ſome conſiderable *ſimilarity* of expreſſion may be occaſioned by the agency of *general principles*, without any ſuſpicion of ſtudied or deſigned *imitation*.

11. An *identity of phraſe or diction*, is a much ſurer note of *plagiariſm*. For conſidering the vaſt variety of *words*, which any language, and eſpecially the more copious ones furniſh, and the infinite poſſible combinations of them into all the forms of *phraſeology*, it would be very ſtrange, if

two perſons ſhould hit on the ſame identical *terms*, and much more ſhould they agree in the ſame preciſe arrangement, and collocation of them in whole ſentences

There is no defending *coincidencies* of this kind; and whatever writers themſelves may pretend, or their friends for them, no one can doubt a moment of ſuch *identity* being a clear and deciſive proof of *imitation*.

Yet this muſt be underſtood with ſome limitations.

For 1. there are in every language ſome current and authorized forms of ſpeech, which can hardly be avoided by a writer without affectation. They are ſuch as expreſs the moſt obvious ſentiments, and which the ordinary occaſions of life are perpetually obtruding on us. Now theſe, as by common agreement, we chuſe to deliver to one another in the ſame *form* of words. Convenience dictates this to one ſet of writers, and politeneſs renders it ſacred in another. Thus it will be true of certain *phraſes*, (as, univerſally, of the *words*, in any language) that they are left in common to all writers, and can be claimed as matter of *property*, by none. Not that ſuch phraſeology will be frequent in the nobler compoſitions, as the familiarity of its uſage takes from their natural reſerve and dignity. Yet on certain *occaſions*, which juſtify this negligence, or in certain *authors*, whoſe refinement is not over ſollicitous about theſe indecorums, we may expect to meet with it. Hamlet ſays of his father,

> *He was a man, take him for all in all*;
> I ſhall not look upon the like again.

which

which I find ſuſpected of being ſtolen from Sophocles, who has the following paſſage in the TRACHINIÆ.

Πάντων ἄριστον ἄνδρα τῶν ἐπὶ χθονὶ
Κτείνας', ΟΠΟΙΟΝ ΑΛΛΟΝ ΟΚ ΟΨΕΙ ΠΟΤΕ. ℣ 824.

The ſentiment being one of the commoneſt, that offers itſelf to the mind, the ſole ground of ſuſpicion, in this caſe, muſt lie in the *expreſſion*, "*I ſhall not look upon the like again*," to which the Greek ſo exactly anſwers. But theſe were the ordinary expreſſions of ſuch ſentiment, in the two languages, and neither the characters of the great poets, nor the ſituation of the ſpeakers, would ſuffer the *affectation* of departing from common uſage.

What is here ſaid of the *ſituation of the ſpeakers* reminds me of another *claſs* of expreſſions, which will often be *ſimilar* in all poets. *Nature*, under the *ſame* conjunctures, gives birth to the *ſame* conceptions; and if they be of ſuch a kind, as to exclude all thought of artifice, and the tricks of eloquence (as on occaſions of deep anxiety and diſtreſs) they run, of themſelves, into the *ſame* form of expreſſion. The wretched Priam, in his lamentation of Hector, lets drop the following words:

Ου μ' ἄχος ὀξὺ κατοίσεται ἄϊδος εἴσω.

"This line, ſays his tranſlator, is particularly "tender, and, almoſt word for word, the ſame "with that of the Patriarch *Jacob*; who, upon a "like occaſion, breaks out into the ſame com"plaint, and tells his children, that, if they de"prive him of his ſon *Benjamin*, *they will bring* "*down his grey hairs with ſorrow to the grave.*"

We

We may, further, except, under this head, certain privileged forms of ſpeech, which the peculiar idioms of *different* languages make neceſſary in them, and which poetry conſecrates in *all*. But this is eaſily obſerved, and its effect is not very conſiderable.

2. In pleading this *identity of expreſſion*, regard muſt be had to the *language*, from which the *theft* is ſuppoſed to be made. If from the *ſame* language (ſetting aſide the exceptions, juſt mentioned) *the ſame arrangement of the ſame words* is admitted as a certain argument of *plagiariſm*: nay, leſs than this will do in ſome inſtances, as where the *imitated expreſſion* is pretty *ſingular*, or ſo remarkable, on any account, as to be *well known*, &c. But if from *another* language, the matter is not ſo eaſy. It can rarely happen, indeed, but by deſign, that there ſhould be the *ſame order or compoſition* of words, in two languages. But that which paſſes even for *literal tranſlation*, is but *a ſimilar compoſition of correſponding words*. And what does this imply, but that the writers conceived of their *object* in the ſame *manner*, and had occaſion to ſet it in the ſame light? An occaſion, which is perpetually recurring to all authors. As may be gathered from that frequent and ſtrong reſemblance in the *expreſſion* of moral ſentiments, obſervable in the writers of every age and country. Can there be a commoner reflexion, or which more conſtantly occurs to the mind under the ſame appearance, that *that* of our great poet, who, ſpeaking of the ſtate after death, calls it

> *That undiſcovered country, from whoſe bourn*
> *No traveller returns.*

Shall we call this a tranſlation of the latin poet?

Nunc

Nunc it per iter tenebricoſum
Illuc, unde negant redire quenquam.
CATULL. III. ℣ 11.

Or, doth it amount to any more than this, that the terms employed by the two writers in expreſſing the ſame obvious thought are *correſpondent?* But *correſpondency* and *identity* are different things. The *latter* is only, where the words are *numerically* the ſame, which can only happen in one and the ſame language: the other is effected by *different ſets of words*, which are numerous in every language, and are therefore no convincing proof (abſtractedly from other circumſtances) of *imitation.*

From theſe general reflexions on *language*, without refining too far, or prying too curiouſly into the myſteries of it, the ſame concluſion meets us, as before. The *expreſſion* of two writers may be *ſimilar*, and ſometimes even *identical*, and yet be *original* in both. Which ſhews the neceſſity there was to lead the reader through this long inveſtigation of the general ſources of *ſimilitude* in works of INVENTION, in order to put him into a condition of judging truly and equitably of thoſe of IMITATION. For if *ſimilarity*, even in this province of *words*, which the reaſon of the thing ſhews to be moſt free from the conſtraint of general rules, be no argument of *theft* in all caſes; much leſs can it be pretended of the other *ſubjects* of this inquiry, which, from the neceſſary uniformity of *nature* in all her appearances, and of *common ſenſe* in its operations upon them, muſt give frequent and unavoidable occaſion to ſuch *ſimilarity*. But then this is all I would inſinuate.

For, after the proper allowances, which candid criticiſm requires to be made on this head, it will ſtill

ſtill be true (and nothing in this Eſſay attempts to "contradict it) "that coincidencies of a certain "*kind*, and in a certain *degree*, cannot fail to "convict a writer of *imitation*." What theſe *are*, the reader, I can readily believe, may be curious, and even eager to inquire. Unhappily, it is not in the nature of the ſubject to afford him ſatisfaction. If, indeed, this matter were reducible to rule, and the *coincidencies*, ſpoken of, could be ſeverally and diſtinctly pointed out, the embaraſſing queſtion, which hath led us ſuch a route, had ſoon been decided. But this attempt were wild and impoſſible. The argument is formed on certain *probabilities*, which are ever ſhifting with the *occaſion*, and can only be eſtimated from it. So that though the natural ſenſe of the mind, in any particular caſe, may perceive diſtinctly enough, what *concluſion* they will bear, yet are they of too vague and various a nature, to be brought under the reſtriction of general rules. All that can be done is to free the mind from the perverſion of that early prejudice, which is ſo prompt to miſtake *reſemblance* univerſally for *imitation*. And what other method of effecting this, than by taking a view of the extent and influence of the genuine powers of *nature*, which when rightly apprehended, make it an eaſier taſk to detect, in particular inſtances, the intervention of *deſign?*

Allowing then (what this previous inquiry not only no way contradicts but even aſſiſts us in perceiving more clearly) that certain *reſemblances* may be urged as ſure and undoubted proofs of *imitation*, it remains only to ſatisfy that other queſtion, "*how far the credit of the imitator is concerned in* "*this diſcovery*;" or, in other words, (ſince the praiſe of *invention* is of the higheſt value to the poet)

poet) "how far the conceſſion of his having bor-
"rowed from others, may be juſtly thought to
"detract from him in that reſpect." An *inquiry*, which, though, for its conſequences to the fame of almoſt all great writers, ſince the time of Homer, of much importance, may yet be diſpatched in few words.

SECTION II.

In entering on this apology for *profeſſed imitators* I ſhall not be ſuſpected of undervaluing the proper merits of *invention*, which unqueſtionably holds the firſt place in the virtues of a poet, and is that power, which, of all others, enables him to give the higheſt entertainment to the reader. Much leſs will it be thought, that I am here pleading the cauſe of thoſe baſe and abject ſpirits, who have not the courage or ability to attempt any thing of themſelves, and can barely make a ſhift, as a great poet of our own expreſſes it, *to creep ſervilely after the ſenſe of* ſome other. Theſe I readily reſign to the ſhame and cenſure, which have ſo juſtly followed them in all ages; as ſubſcribing to the truth of that remark, "*Imitatio*
"*per ſe ipſa non ſufficit*, vel *quia pigri eſt ingenii*,
"*contentum eſſe iis, quæ ſunt ab aliis inventa.*"
My concern is only with thoſe, whoſe talent of original genius is not diſputed, but the *degree* of ſtrength and vigour, with which it prevails in them, ſomewhat lowered in the general eſtimation, from this imputed crime of PLAGIARISM. And, with reſpect to ſuch as theſe, ſomething, I conceive, may be ſaid, not undeſerving the notice of the candid reader.

1. The

1. The moſt univerſal cauſe, inducing *imitation* in great writers, is, the force of early *diſcipline and education*. Were it true, that poets took their *deſcriptions and images* immediately and ſolely from common nature, one might expect, indeed, a general *ſimilitude* in their works, but ſuch, as could ſeldom or never, in all its circumſtances, amount to a ſtrict and rigorous correſpondency. The *properties* of things are ſo numerous, and the *lights* in which they ſhew themſelves to a mind, uninfluenced by former prejudices, ſo different, that ſome grace of novelty, ſome tincture of original beauty, would conſtantly infuſe itſelf into all their delineations. But the caſe is far otherwiſe. Strong as the bent of the imagination may be to contemplate living forms and to gaze with delight on this grand theatre of *nature*, its attention is ſoon taken off, and arreſted, on all ſides, by thoſe infinite mirrors, and reflexions of things, which it every where meets with in the world of *imitation*. We are habituated to a ſurvey of this *ſecondary and derivative nature*, as preſented in the admired works of *art*, thro' the intire courſe of our education. The writings of the beſt poets are put into our hands, to inſtruct us in the knowledge of *men and things*, as ſoon as we are capable of apprehending them. Nay, we are taught to liſp their very *words*, in our tendereſt infancy. Some quick and tranſient glances we cannot chooſe but caſt, at times, on the phænomena of living beauty; but its forms are rarely contemplated by us with diligence and aſſiduity, but in theſe *mirrors*, which are the conſtant furniture of our ſchools and cloſets. And no wonder, were we even left to ourſelves, that ſuch ſhould be our *proper* choice and determination. For, by the prodigious and almoſt magical operations of *fancy* on original objects, they even

ſhew

ſhew fairer, and are made to look more attractive in theſe artificial repreſentations, than in their own rude and native aſpects. Thus by the united powers of *diſcipline*, and *inclination* we are almoſt neceſſitated to *ſee* nature in the ſame *light*, and to know her only in the *dreſs*, in which her happier ſuitors and favourites firſt gave her to obſervation.

The effect of this ſtrong and early bias of the mind, which inſenſibly grows into the inveteracy of habit, needs not be inſiſted on. When the poet, thus tutored in the works of *imitation*, comes to addreſs himſelf to *invention*, theſe familiar images, which he hath ſo often and ſo fondly admired, immediately ſtep in and intercept his obſervation of their great *original*. Or, if he has power to hold them off, and turn his eye directly on the *primary object*, he ſtill inclines to view it only on that ſide and in thoſe *lights*, in which he has been accuſtomed to ſtudy it. Nor let it be ſaid, that this is the *infirmity* only, of weak minds. It belongs to our very natures, and the utmoſt vigour of genius is no ſecurity againſt it. *Cuſtom*, in this as in every thing elſe, moulds, at pleaſure, the ſoft and ductile matter of a *minute* ſpirit, and by degrees can even bend the elaſtic metal of the *greateſt*.

And if this force of habit can thus determine a writer knowingly, to *imitation*, it cannot be thought ſtrange, that it ſhould frequently carry him into *reſemblance*, when himſelf perhaps is not not aware of it. Great readers, who have their memories fraught with the ſtores of ancient and modern poetry, unavoidably employ the *ſentiments*, and ſometimes the very *words* of other writers, without any diſtinct remembrance of them, or ſo much as the ſuſpicion of having ſeen them. At the leaſt, their general caſt of thinking or turn of expreſſion will be much affected by them. For the moſt original writer

writer as unavoidably takes a *tincture* from the authors in which he has been moſt converſant; as water, from the beds of earths or minerals, it hath happened to run over. Eſpecially ſuch authors, as are ſtudied and even got by heart by us in our early youth, leave a laſting impreſſion, which is hardly ever effaced out of the mind. Hence a certain conſtrained and unoriginal air, in ſome degree or other, in every genius, throughly diſciplined by a *courſe of learned education.* Which, by the way, leads to a queſtion, not very abſurd in itſelf, however it may paſs with moſt readers, for paradoxical, viz. "*Whether the uſual forms of learning be not rather injurious to the true poet, than really aſſiſting to him?*" It ſhould ſeem to be ſo for a *natural reaſon.* For the faculty of *invention,* as all our other powers, is much improved and ſtrengthened by exerciſe. And great reading prevents this, by demanding the perpetual exerciſe of the *memory.* Thus the mind becomes not only indiſpoſed, but, for want of uſe, really unqualified, to turn itſelf to other views, than ſuch as habitual recollection eaſily preſents to it. And this I am perſuaded hath been the caſe with many a fine genius, and eſpecially with *one* of our own country; who, as appears from ſome original efforts in the ſublime allegorical way, had no want of natural talents for the greater poetry; which yet were ſo reſtrained and diſabled by his conſtant and ſuperſtitious ſtudy of the old claſſics, that he was, in fact, but a very ordinary poet. They, who prefer the freſhneſs and grace of novelty, that native gloſs of beauty, which pure invention gives to underived ſentiment or expreſſion, to every other virtue, will therefore incline to this opinion. But if, indeed, it be, as one ſays, that "tho' invention be the mother "of poetry, yet this child is, like all others, born "naked,

" naked, and muſt be nouriſhed with care, clothed " with exactneſs and elegance, educated with in- " duſtry, inſtructed with art, improved with appli- " cation, corrected by ſeverity, and accompliſhed " with labour and with time, before it arrives at " any degree of perfection;" [Sir Will. Temple, Eſſay on poetry.] If this be the caſe, the culture of *education*, and the uſe and ſtudy of the beſt models of *art* may be thought expedient. Yet this may, after all, be wanting only to inferior wits. The truly inſpired, it may be, have need only of their *touch* from heaven. And does not the example of the firſt of *our* poets, and the moſt honoured for his invention, of *any*, give a countenance to this enthuſiaſtic concluſion? It is poſſible, there are, who think *a want of reading*, as well as a vaſt ſuperiority of genius, hath contributed to lift this aſtoniſhing man, to the glory of being eſteemed the moſt original THINKER and SPEAKER, ſince the times of Homer.

2. But were the power of early *habit* to incline the mind to *imitation* of leſs power, than it really is, yet the high hand of *authority* would compel it. For the firſt originals in the ſeveral ſpecies of poetry, like the Autocthones of old, were deemed to have come into the world by a kind of miracle. They were perfect prodigies, at leaſt reputed ſo by the admiring multitude, from their firſt appearance. So that their authority, in a ſhort time, became ſacred; and ſucceeding writers were obliged, at the hazard of their fame, and as they dreaded the charge of a preſumptuous and *prophane libertiniſm* in poetry, to take them for their guides and models. Which is ſaid even without the licence of a figure; at leaſt of *one* of them; whom Cicero calls *the fountain and origin of all*

DIVINE *inſtitutions*[n]; and another, of elder and more reverend eſtimation, pronounces to be ὁ θεὸς καὶ θεῶν προφήτης[o].

But this was not all: *reaſon* itſelf ſoon came in, to the ſupport of *authority*; and ſo added a double tie to its obligations. For when ſober and enlightened criticiſm began to inſpect, at leiſure, theſe miracles of early invention, it preſently acknowledged them for the *beſt*, as well as the moſt *antient*, poetic models; and accordingly recommended, or more properly enjoined them by rule, to the imitation of all ages.

And what is here obſerved of the *influence* of theſe maſter ſpirits, whom the joint admiration and criticiſm of antiquity have placed at the head of the poetic world will, with ſome allowance, hold, alſo, of *that* of later, though leſs original writers; whoſe uncommon merits have given them a diſtinguiſhed rank in it.

3. *Next*, (as it uſually comes to paſs in other inſtances) what was, at firſt, impoſed by the rigour of *authority*, ſoon grew reſpectable in *itſelf*, and was choſen for its own ſake, as a *virtue*, which deſerved no ſmall commendation. It was readily enough believed, that what had raiſed the leaders in poetry to ſuch prodigious honours, could not be too cloſely, or too ambitiouſly emulated. And, though the greater part were unable to keep pace with them in their airy excurſions, it was ſtill deemed ſomething, in all humility, "*to follow at* "*diſtance and adore their footſteps.*" The effect of this ſuperſtition was clearly ſeen in the works of all ſucceeding poets in the *ſame* language. But, when a new and different one was to be furniſhed,

[n] *Somn. Scip.* II. c. 10. [o] PLATO, *Alcibiad. B.*

and

and adorned with freſh *models*, it became much more conſpicuous. For, beſides the ſame or a ſtill higher veneration of their *inventions*, which the diſtance of place and time inſenſibly procured to them, the grace of *novelty*, which they would appear to have in another *language*, was, now, a further inducement to copy them. Hence we find it to be the utmoſt pride and boaſt of the *Roman* writers, ſuch I mean as came the neareſt to them in the divinity of their genius, to follow the practice, and emulate the virtues, of the *Grecian*.

Libera per vacuum poſui veſtigia princeps,
Non aliena meo preſſi pede.

And, on the revival of theſe arts in later times and more barbarous languages, the ſame ſpirit appeared again, or rather ſuperior honours were paid to ſucceſsful *imitation*. So that what a polite French writer declares on this head is, now, become the fixed and authorized opinion of the learned in all countries. " C'eſt même donner " une grace à ſes ouvrages, que de les orner de " fragmens antiques. Des vers d' Horace & de " Virgile bien traduits, & mis en œuvre à propos " dans un poëme François, y font le même effet " que les ſtatuës antiques font dans la gallerie de " Verſailles. Les lecteurs retrouvent avec plaiſir, " ſous une nouvelle forme, la penſée, qui leur " plût antrefois en latin. Ils ſont bien aiſes d' " avoir l' occaſion de reciter les vers du poëte an- " cien, pour les comparer avec les vers de l' imi- " tateur moderne qui a voulu lutter contre ſon " original. Auſſi les auteurs les plus vantez pour " la fécondité de leur génie, n'ont-ils pas dédaigné " d'ajouter quelquefois cette eſpéce d'agrément à " leurs ouvrages. Etoit-ce la ſtérilité d'imagina-

" tion, qui contraignoit *Corneille & la Fontaine* " d'emprunter tant de choſes des anciens? *Mo-* " *liere* a fait ſouvent la même choſe, & riche de " ſon propre fonds, il n' a pas laiſſé de traduire " dix vers d' *Ovide* de ſuite dans la *ſecond acte du* " *Miſantrope* [p]."

It ſhould, further, be added, that this praiſe of borrowing from the originals of *Greece* and *Rome* is now extended to the imitation of great *modern* authors. Every body applauds this practice, where the imitation is of approved writers in *different* languages. And even in the *ſame* language, when this liberty is taken with the moſt ancient and venerable, it is not denied to have its *grace* and merit.

4. But, beſides theſe ſeveral incitements, *ſimilarity of genius*, alone, will almoſt neceſſarily determine a writer to the love and ſtudious emulation of ſome other. For, though it is with the *minds*, as the *faces* of men, that no two are exactly and in every feature alike; yet the general caſt of their genius, as well as the air and turn of the countenance, will frequently be very *ſimilar* in different perſons. When two ſuch ſpirits approach, they run together with eagerneſs and rapidity: the inſtinctive bias of the mind towards *imitation* being now quickened by *paſſion*. This is chiefly ſaid in reſpect of that uniformity of *ſtyle and manner*, which, whenever we obſerve it in two writers, we almoſt conſtantly charge to the account of *imitation*. Indeed where the reſemblance holds to the laſt degree of *minuteneſs*, or where the *peculiarities*, only, of the model are taken, there is ground enough for this ſuſpicion. For every ori-

[p] *Reflex. ſur la Poeſ. & ſur la peint.* T. II. p. 80. Par. 1746.

ginal

ginal genius, however conſonant, in the main, to any other, has ſtill ſome diſtinct marks and characters of his own, by which he may be diſtinguiſhed; and to copy *peculiarities*, when there is no appearance of the ſame original ſpirit, which gave Birth to them, is manifeſt affectation. But the queſtion is put of ſuch, whoſe *manner* hath only a *general*, though ſtrong, reſemblance to that of ſome other, and whoſe true genius is above the ſuſpicion of falling into the trap of what Horace happily calls, EXEMPLAR VITIIS IMITABILE. And of theſe it is perhaps juſter to ſay, that a previous correſpondency of *character* impelled to *imitate*, than that imitation itſelf produced that correſpondency of *character*. At leaſt (which is all my concern at preſent) it will be allowed to incline a writer ſtrongly to *imitation*; and where a congenial ſpirit appears to provoke him to it, a candid critic will not be forward to turn this circumſtance to the diſhonour of his *invention*.

5. Laſtly, (for the reader will think it high time to come to a concluſion of this matter) were every other conſideration out of the way, yet, oftentimes, the *very nature of the poet's theme* would compell him to a diligent *imitation* of preceding writers. I do not mean this of ſuch ſubjects, as ſuggeſt and produce a neceſſary conformity of deſcription, whether purpoſely intended or not. This hath been fully conſidered. But my meaning is, that, when the greater provinces of poetry have been, already, occupied, and its moſt intereſting ſcenes exhauſted; or, rather, their Application to the Uſes of poetry determined by great maſters, it becomes, thenceforward, unavoidable for ſucceeding writers to draw from their ſources. The law of probability exacts this at their hands; and

one may almoſt affirm, that to *copy* them cloſely is to paint after *nature*. I ſhall explain myſelf by an inſtance or two.

With regard to the religious opinions and ceremonies of the Pagan world, the writings of Homer, it is ſaid and very truly, were "*the ſtandard* "*of private belief, and the grand directory of public* "*worſhip*[q]." Whatever liberty might have been taken with the rites and gods of Paganiſm before his Time, yet, when he had given an exact deſcription of *both*, and had formed, to the ſatisfaction of all, the eſtabliſhed religion into a kind of *ſyſtem*, ſucceeding poets were obliged, of courſe, to take their theology from him; and could no longer be thought to write *juſtly and naturally* of their Gods, than whilſt their *deſcriptions* conformed to the *authentic* delineations of *Homer*. His relations, and even the *fictions*, which his genius had raiſed on the popular creed of elder Paganiſm, were now the proper archetype of all *religious repreſentations*. And to ſpeak of *theſe*, as given *truly and originally*, is, in effect, to ſay, that they were borrowed or rather tranſcribed from the page of *that poet*.

And the ſame may be obſerved of *hiſtorical facts*, as of *religious traditions*. For not unfrequently, where the ſubject is taken from authentic hiſtory, the authority of a preceding poet, is ſo prevalent as to render *any* account of the matter improbable, which is not faſhioned and regulated after his ideas. A ſucceeding writer is neither at liberty to relate matters of fact, which no one thinks *credible*, nor to *feign* afreſh for himſelf. In this caſe, again, all that the moſt original genius has to do, is to *imitate*. We have been told that the *ſecond book of the*

[q] *Inquiry into the L. and W. of Homer*, p. 174.

ÆNEIS was tranſlated from Piſander[r]. Another thinks, it was taken from the LITTLE ILIAD[s]. Or, why confine him to either of theſe, when METRODORUS, SYAGRUS, HEGESIANAX, ARATUS, and others, wrote poems on *the taking of* TROY? But granting the poet (as is moſt likely) to have had theſe originals before him, what ſhall we infer from it? Only this, that he took his principal facts and circumſtances (as we ſee he was obliged to do for the ſake of *probability*) from theſe writers. And why ſhould this be thought a greater crime in him, than in POLYGNOTUS; who, in his famous picture on this ſubject, was under the neceſſity, and for the ſame reaſon, of collecting his *ſubject matter* from ſeveral poets[t]?

Putting all theſe things together we ſhall not, I conceive, be juſtified in thinking ſo hardly, as is uſually done, of the claſs of *imitators*; which is now, by the concurrence of various circumſtances, become the neceſſary character of almoſt all poets. It would be cruel, indeed, to condemn a writer for what he cannot avoid; and to explode the nobleſt productions of modern wit on the ſingle ſcore of their wanting this impoſſible fame of being *original*. Not but there will ſtill be enough left to ſecure this praiſe, in any reaſonable ſenſe of the word, to them. For, after all the allowances, that need be made on this head, the native energy of true genius will ever be ſeen to break triumphantly, through the bondage of *imitation*. And nothing but the very malignity of envy at large, or as it is collected together, and condenſed in what is now called *criticiſm*, can deny to ſuch ef-

[r] MACROBIUS, v. *Saturnal.* [s] *Inquiry into L, &c. of Homer*, p. 319. [t] *Mem. de l'Acad. des Inſcript. &c.* Tom. vi. p. 445.

forts of poetry the full glory of *invention*. All which I cannot better illuſtrate and impreſs on the candid reader, than by the following ſtory of a great maſter in a kindred art, the incomparable DOMINICHINO.

This great man having finiſhed his *picture of* ST JEROM, which M. Pouſſin (who looked upon Dominichino as the moſt conſiderable of all the ſcholars of *Annibal Carachi*) never ſpoke of but in terms of rapture, the other painters of that time, who had nothing to object to the piece itſelf, thought to blaſt the credit of his performance by ſaying, that he had taken the thought of *Auguſtin Carachi*, on a like occaſion. The calumny was eagerly catched at and propagated with great induſtry by the prejudiced and ignorant. But men of ſenſe and candour acquitted him of the charge; as clearly perceiving, that though there was indeed a likeneſs in the two deſigns, yet it was no other, than what might well occur in the performance of two ſuch maſters; if not without ſome degree of *imitation*, yet without deſtroying his claim to the proper honour of invention. The account of this matter, as given by the fine writer of *the lives of the painters*, is ſo pertinent to the caſe in hand, that I ſhall be allowed to tranſcribe his own words. " Ceux, qui n'etoient ni " paſſionez ni jaloux d'honeur du Dominichino, " reconnoiſſoient dans la *diſpoſition*, & les *atti-* " *tudes* des figures, & dans toutes les *expreſſions* " des viſages, une ſi grande difference, qu' encore " que la Dominichin eût conſervé une idée géné- " rale de la penſée d'Auguſtin, on ne devoit pas " l'accuſer d'avoir fait un vol; mais plutôt lui " donner des louanges d'avoir imité ſon mâitre, & " s'être bien voulu ſervir, comme il la confeſſoit

" lui

" lui même de quelques unes de ſes expreſſions,
" qu'il avoit etudiés autre-fois dans dès tems,
" qu'il ne penſoit pas à faire cet ouvrage, mais qui
" lui etoient revenûes naturellement dans l'eſprit;
" comme font d'ordinaire toutes les choſes, qu'on
" apprend avec ſoin, pour ne les pas oublier[u].

To ſay the truth, conſidering the circumſtances of modern poets and the real merit, as here explained, of converting to their own uſe the labours of their predeceſſors, it were, perhaps, the better way for men of genius to apply themſelves directly, and without reſerve to *imitation*, and not to perplex and torture their wits for the ſake of attaining the envied *fame* of *inventors*. One of the *firſt* of their family amongſt ourſelves hath taken the lead in this *route*, and even calls aloud upon his brethren to follow him in it.

" All that is left us, ſays this original writer,
" is to recommend our productions by the imita-
" tion of the antients: and it will be found true,
" that, in every age, the higheſt character for ſenſe
" and learning has been obtained by thoſe who
" have been the moſt indebted to them. For to
" ſay truth, whatever is very good ſenſe, muſt
" have been common ſenſe in all times; and what
" we call learning is but the knowledge of our
" predeceſſors. Therefore they who ſay our
" thoughts are not our own, becauſe they reſem-
" ble the antients, may as well ſay, our faces are
" not our own, becauſe they are like our fathers:
" and indeed it is very unreaſonable, that people
" ſhould expect us to be ſcholars, and yet be an-
" gry to find us ſo[w]."

[u] FELIBIEN, *Entret.* vii.

[w] *Mr. Pope's pref. to his works.*

He

He adds, "*I fairly confeſs, that I have ſerved "myſelf all I could by reading:*" where the good ſenſe of the *practice*, is as conſpicuous, as the ingenuity, ſo becoming the greatneſs of his character, in *confeſſing* it. For, when a writer, who, as we have ſeen, is driven by ſo many powerful motives to the imitation of preceding models, revolts againſt them all and determines, at any rate, to be *original*, nothing can be expected but an awkward ſtraining in every thing. *Improper method*, *forced conceits*, and *affected expreſſion* are the certain iſſue of ſuch obſtinacy. The buſineſs is to be *unlike*; and this he may very poſſibly be, but at the expence of graceful eaſe and true beauty. For he puts himſelf, at beſt, into a convulſed, unnatural ſtate; and it is well, if he be not forced, beſide his purpoſe, to leave *common ſenſe*, as well as his *model*, behind him. Like one, who would break looſe from an impediment, which holds him faſt; the very endeavour to get clear of it throws him into *uneaſy attitudes*, and *violent contorſions*; or, if he gain his liberty at laſt, it is by an *effort*, which carries him much further than the *point*, he would wiſh to ſtop at.

And, that the reader may not ſuſpect me of aſſerting this without ſome ground of experience, let me exemplify what has been here ſaid in the remarkable caſe of a very eminent perſon, who, with all the advantages of art and nature that could be required to adorn and accompliſh the true poet, was ruined by this ſingle error. The perſon I mean was SIR WILLIAM D'AVENANT; whoſe *Gondibert* will remain a perpetual monument of the miſchiefs, which muſt ever ariſe from this affectation of originality in lettered and polite poets.

The

The great author, when he projected his plan of an heroic poem, was ſo far from intending to ſteer his courſe by *example*, that he ſets out, in his preface, with upbraiding the followers of Homer, as a baſe and timorous crew of *coaſters*, who would not adventure to launch forth on the vaſt ocean of invention. For ſpeaking of this poet, he obſerves, "that, as ſea marks are chiefly uſeful to "coaſters, and ſerve not thoſe who have the am-"bition of diſcoverers, that love to ſail in un-"tried ſeas; ſo he hath rather proved a guide "for thoſe, whoſe ſatisfied wit will not venture "beyond the track of others; than to them, "who affect a new and remote way of thinking; "who eſteem it a deficiency and meanneſs of "mind, to ſtay and depend upon the authority "of example[x]."

And, afterwards, he profeſſedly makes his own merit to conſiſt in "an endeavour to lead truth "through unfrequented and new ways, and from "the moſt remote ſhades; by repreſenting nature, "though not in an affected, yet in an unuſual "dreſs[y]." Theſe were the principles he went upon; let us now attend to the ſucceſs of his endeavours.

The METHOD of his work is defective in many reſpects. To inſtance in the two following. Obſerving the large compaſs of the ancient epic, for which he ſaw no cauſe in nature, and which, he ſuppoſed, had been followed only from a blind deference to the authority of the firſt model, he reſolved to conſtruct an heroic poem on the narrower and, as he conceived, juſter plan of the dramatic poets. And, becauſe it was their prac-

[x] *Pref. to* GONDIBERT, p. 2. *Lond.* 1651, 4to. [y] *Ib.* p. 30.

tice,

tice, for the purpoſe of *raiſing the paſſions* by a cloſe accelerated plot, and for the convenience of *repreſentation*, to conclude their ſubject in *five acts*, he affectedly goes about to reſtrain himſelf within the ſame limits. The effect was, that, cutting himſelf off, by this means, from the opportunity of digreſſive ornaments, which contribute ſo much to the pomp of the epic poetry; and, what is more eſſential, from the advantage of the moſt gradual and circumſtantiated narration, which gives an air of *truth and reality* to the fable, he failed in accompliſhing the proper *end* of this poem, ADMIRATION; *produced* by a grandeur of deſign, and variety of important incidents, and *ſuſtained* by all the energy and minute particularity of deſcription.

2. It was eſſential to the ancient epos to raiſe and exalt the fable by the intervention of *ſupernatural agency*. This, again, the poet miſtook for the prejudice of the affected imitators of Homer, "who had ſo often led them into heaven and "hell, till, by converſation with gods and ghoſts, "they ſometimes deprive us of thoſe natural pro-"babilities in ſtory, which are inſtructive to hu-"man life[z]." Here then he would needs be original; and ſo, by recording only the affairs of men, hath fairly omitted a ſublime and neceſſary part of the epic plan, and that which, of all others, had given the greateſt ſtate and magnificence to its conſtruction. Yet here, to do him juſtice, one thing deſerves our commendation. It had been the folly of the Italian romancers, who were at that time the beſt poets, to run too much into extravagant fiction. "Not only to exceed the *work*,

[z] *Ib.* p. 3.

"but

" but alſo the *poſſibility* of nature, they would " have impenetrable armors, inchanted caſtles, in- " vulnerable bodies, iron men, flying horſes, and " a thouſand other ſuch things, which are eaſily " feigned by them that dare[a]." Theſe conceits, he rightly ſaw, had too ſlender a foundation in the ſerious belief of men to juſtify a relation of them. And had he only dropped theſe, his conduct had been juſt. But, as is the weakneſs of human nature, the obſervation of this miſtake in his predeceſſors determined him to the other extreme of admitting nothing, however well eſtabliſhed in the general opinion, that was *ſupernatural.*

And as here he did too much, ſo in another reſpect, it may be obſerved, he did too little. The romancers, before ſpoken of, had infected modern poetry, as well with falſe notions of *gallantry* in ordinary life, as of the *marvellous* in their exorbitant fictions. Yet here this original genius, who was not to be held by the ſhackles of ſuperſtition, ſuffered himſelf to be entrapped in the ſilken net of *love and honour.* And ſo diſgraced his pictures of human life, by what is the worſt part of the Gothic romances, their *fantaſtic manners*, at the ſame time that he rejected what had the higheſt grace in the antient epic, a *ſober intermixture of religion.*

The *execution* of his poem was anſwerable to the general *method.* His SENTIMENTS are frequently forced, and ſo tortured by an affectation of wit, that every ſtanza hath the air of an epigram. And the EXPRESSION, in which he cloaths them, is ſo quaint and figurative, as turns his deſcription almoſt into a continued riddle.

[a] *Anſwer to the Preface*, p. 81.

Such

Such was the effect of a ſtudious affectation of *originality* in a writer, who, but for this miſconduct, had been in the firſt rank of our poets. His endeavour was to keep clear of the models, in which his youth had been inſtructed, and which he perfectly underſtood. And in this indeed he ſucceeded. But the ſucceſs loſt him the poſſeſſion of, what his large ſoul appears to have been full of, a true and permanent glory; which hath ever ariſen, and can only ariſe from the unambitious ſimplicity of nature; *contemplated* in her own proper form, or, by *reflexion*, in the faithful mirror of thoſe very models, he ſo much dreaded.

In ſhort, from what hath been here advanced, and eſpecially as confirmed by ſo uncommon an inſtance, I think myſelf entitled to come at once, to this *general concluſion*, which they, who have a comprehenſive view of the hiſtory of letters, in their ſeveral periods, and a juſt diſcernment to eſtimate their ſtate in them, will hardly diſpute with me, "that, though many cauſes concur to "produce a thorough degeneracy of taſte in any "country; yet the *principal*, ever, is, "THIS "ANXIOUS DREAD OF IMITATION IN POLITE "AND CULTIVATED WRITERS."

And, if ſuch be the caſe, among the other uſes of this Eſſay, it may perhaps ſerve for a ſeaſonable admonition to the poets of our time, to relinquiſh their vain hopes of *originality*, and turn themſelves to a ſtricter imitation of the beſt models. I ſay, a *ſeaſonable admonition*; for the more poliſhed a nation is, and the more generally theſe models are underſtood, the greater danger there is, as was now obſerved, of running into that worſt of literary faults, *affectation*. But to ſtimulate their endeavours to this practice, the judgment of the public

public ſhould firſt be ſet right; and their readers prepared to place a juſt value upon it. In this reſpect, too, I would willingly contribute, in ſome ſmall degree, to the ſervice of letters. And, if my zeal be thought too forward and preſuming, let me excuſe it by confeſſing, that I am, perhaps, ſomewhat quickened in this attempt by the *call* of friendſhip. For it need not be diſſembled, that, in what I have now written on this ſubject, I have had an eye to the deſigns of two excellent perſons; who are, already, well known to the public by ſome ſlighter Eſſays; but are preparing much greater things, and in the pure and ſimple ſtyle of claſſical antiquity. The genuine merit of theſe performances, when they ſhall appear, will be the beſt apology for their authors. But I ſuppoſed, it might not be unbecoming a friend to put in a word, beforehand, in the behalf of two ſuch IMITATORS; *one* of whom profeſſes to form himſelf on the model, and would give an exact image, of the Greek DRAMA; while the *other* adventures to project a ſtill nobler deſign, on the plan of the ancient and legitimate EPIC.

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